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FBIS-EEU-94-237 *9 December 1994*

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U.S. Said Blocking Peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina

AU0912110694 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 5 Dec 94 p 4

[Commentary by Ivaylo Georgiev: "United States Has Again Blocked Peace Mechanism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting of the Contact Group on Bosnia-Herzegovina at the ministerial level, which had been prepared with so much publicity and preliminary meetings of the U.S., Russian, UK, French, and German chief diplomats, has proven to be much ado about nothing. The communique that has been published, again repeats old and ancient principles regarding the partition of Bosnia according to a ratio of 51:49 in favor of the Muslims and Croats and to the detriment of the Serbs, without even mentioning the so-called "Plan B," i.e., the right of the Bosnian Serbs to enter into a confederation with Serbia, precisely the same right as the Muslims and Croats would have regarding a confederation with Croatia.

Even without attending the Brussels meeting, you could bet it was U.S. Secretary of State Christopher who, under pressure from his proteges in Sarajevo, blocked the Russian initiative, which had already obtained French and UK support. This is so because they, and only they, want Bosnia to be simultaneously "united and undivided" and yet have the right to form a confederation with Croatia, so that their territory could be more vital, while their enemies the Serbs would be deprived of the right to having confederative ties with neighboring Serbia. According to the Muslims, such confederative ties with Serbia would destroy Bosnia, while confederative ties with Croatia would strengthen it. This is a strange logic, which was nevertheless decisively supported by Washington—at least for the time being.

For who knows what time the same tactic is being used? It is precisely when the world is nearing a peaceful solution that Washington interferes, under pressure from Sarajevo, and frustrates the attaining of a solution. Under such circumstances, one could hardly predict a success at the Sunday mission in Belgrade of Douglas Hurd and Alain Juppe, foreign ministers of the UK and France. This is so because they will try to convince Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic that what failed to materialize in Brussels because of the U.S. resistance still continues to apply, i.e., that the Bosnian Serbs will nonetheless obtain the right to form a confederation with "Mother Serbia."

However, the Serbian president is too experienced to believe such secret promises. He has been hearing for almost six months, from his Russian friend Andrey Kozyrev, what Hurd and Juppe would tell him now, without this being supported by any official decision or document related to the comprehensive solution of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia.

After Christopher's trick in Brussels, Milosevic will certainly be even more careful, because he knows that without any written commitment he cannot believe any promises related to the lifting of the sanctions.

CSCE Envisioned as 'European United Nations'

AU0912105894 Sofia KONTINENT in Bulgarian 6 Dec 94 p 6

[Commentary by Georgi Anastasov: "Toward a European United Nations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The CSCE summit in Budapest adopted a "historical" decision: From now on it will not be a "conference" but an "organization."

The sharp clash that developed during the summit's first day between Russia and NATO, however, suspiciously reinforced the similarity with another organization: the United Nations. In addition to the name, the resemblance began also in the character of the dispute, and Yeltsin even strengthened the analogy by referring to the "cold peace."

The United Nations became famous as the largest and most futile chitchat parlor in the world. Even there, however, things were more rational than in the "European United Nations," because the East-West confrontation was clearly outlined at the United Nations. The European variant, although comprising a smaller number of states, offers more conflicts. Clinton supports the admission of East Europe to NATO, Russia wants to replace NATO with a new European organization, and NATO itself is torn apart by contradictions concerning Bosnia. Simultaneously, Jacques Delors, Chairman of the European Commission, urges that Russia not be isolated by a hasty admission of East Europe to NATO. However, he appears to be concerned with the possibility that the European Union could press him to do the same, because it has already been said that the first step toward the Atlantic Alliance obligatorily passes through membership in the European Union.

One thing is certain: The European United Nations will provide many new international bureaucrats with bread.

Editorial Urges Halt to Arms Embargo 'Demagogy'

AU0912125394 Sofia 24 CHASA in Bulgarian 5 Dec 94 p 8

[Editorial: "And Who Will Supply Us With Arms?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We should not be puzzled that the war in Bosnia appears to be endless. Now a Turkish general has admitted that Ankara is supplying the Muslims [Bosnia-Herzegovina Government] with firearms provided by America.

It was a public secret that the sanctions began to crack from the very beginning, because each of the superpowers wanted to lend a helping hand to its allies in the conflict. It is time to stop this demagogy, to cancel the embargo or really enforce it strictly.

The whole thing is very bad for us, because our leaders appear to believe everything they are being told and pretend that they do not see what is going on around us. Tomorrow they will learn with a great surprise how well our neighbors have been armed.

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No Early Membership in European Union Expected

95CH0067C Prague PRAGUE POST in English 29 Nov 94 p 11

[Commentary by Daniel Kumermann, writer on the foreign desk at LIDOVE NOVINY: "Beware the Not-Quite-European Czech Republic"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Czech Republic will submit its application to join the European Union in 1996 and expects to be in by the end of the century. A special government committee dealing with the country's integration into Europe will be established at the beginning of 1995.

There you are, "Old Continent." Beware.

We Czechs sure expressed a lot of doubts in the past as to your being truly ready for us—your being up to the standard of those who wrestled Czechoslovakia out of the communist dragon's mouth.

All that, however, is over now, and even Doubter No. 1 is willing to grant you another chance: Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus has volunteered to head the above-mentioned government committee.

There is this declaration of interest. There is a new, top-level feasibility committee, and there is a newly pro-European prime minister. But there isn't much of what is needed most, a new kind of vision and understanding of what Europe stands for. Or, better still, what Europe also stands for.

Practically everybody here thinks that Western Europe means a high standard of living and a successful economy. Quite a few understand, too, that this also means hard work and good management. And a large proportion of these even realize that it's not somebody else who is going to work hard for them. In that respect, we may be on a European level quite soon—at least on the level of the "poorer" members of the union. No wonder that, when approaching the EU, it is usually the economy that is pushed forth as our major success.

The issue that comes up next is law.

Each applicant country has to modify its legal system so that it is in agreement with EU legislation. Even there, the Czech Republic could claim considerable success were it not the one unfortunate drawback: the citizenship law.

The law itself could have been compatible with its EU counterparts. The situation in which it was passed—upon the split of Czechoslovakia—is, however, much less European. The end result is that this "almost" European law prevents thousands who were born to Czechoslovak parents on Czech soil from obtaining Czech citizenship.

Those harmed most by the law are usually Romanies (Gypsies), and thus the whole thing is seen as smacking of racism. So far, the law has earned the Czech Republic reprimands from the Council of Europe, The Helsinki Committee of the U.S. Senate and a few other "minor" institutions.

Mistakes happen even in the best of families, as the Czech saying goes, and the whole affair could have been easily forgiven if the Czechs simply disclaimed the law and upgraded it. They did not. Czech officials have announced, both directly and indirectly, that they're happy with the law and that there is nothing in need of change. Like authorities, like people—that's the way it seems to work here. There have been few protests by human-rights organizations. And the supposed watchdogs of democracy—the media—have caught cold and cannot produce a decent bark. Similarly eloquent silence came not so long ago when a group of right-wing extremists attacked a remembrance ceremony for Germans killed at the end of World War II.

We could go on and on naming instances in which the Czech authorities, in full agreement with the silent majority, present a very un-European image.

For instance, there is a distinct unwillingness to accept the ecology as one of the most important current issues and a refusal to admit that environmental concerns cannot be swept under the carpet. Europe nurtures very distinctive ideas on sustainable growth, whereas Mr. Klaus is not even ready to accept the existence of the concept.

Also, there is rampant corruption, thanks to a lack of conflict-of-interest laws. Isn't the most popular Czech politician a man who changes his views almost as often as his socks? (Nothing against Mr. Dlouhy's socks, mind you. He always looks spick-and-span.)

There also seems to be a government-instigated campaign against intellectuals and "morality seekers" who have a different vision of Europe than the "officially approved" ultra-libertarian one.

These problems are quite natural: Communism affected not just the economy, but the souls and minds of the people. Official unwillingness to accept this, however, prevents the country from remedying these ills.

The rosy proclaimers who speak of EU membership before the end of the century can't help but remind one of the "Soviet comrades" who also planned to skip whole historical periods.

The words of Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec sound quite prophetic. At a recent press conference, he said the entry of the Czech Republic into the EU would eventually be decided by the Czech population. He then mentioned a possible referendum and the likelihood that people will vote for the pro-European parties.

The aforementioned committee should than be a beacon in the painful process of these deep changes. Given the prevailing ideology of the current government, which may survive even the 1996 general elections, it will be a very poor beacon.

The idea of EU membership coming at the turn of the century is ridiculous. And the more realistic authorities are about it in the end, the more chance it may come to life in the next century.

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Havel To Deliver State of Nation Address

95CH0067B Prague PRAGUE POST in English 29 Nov 94 p 5

[Article by Maggie Ledford Lawson: "Despite Klaus' Protest, Havel Plans To Address Parliament"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Vaclav Havel's plan to deliver a state of the nation address before parliament has ignited a controversy over who holds the reigns of power in the Czech government.

Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, who has thus far failed to give such an address himself, said Havel is not constitutionally entitled to make the speech, because the president doesn't hold executive power.

The prime minister has no objection to Havel's speaking to parliament—as long as he sticks to subjects he knows, such as history, morality and culture, according to Klaus' spokeswoman, Jana Petrova.

"There's no point in Havel's talking about such matters as economics and government, because he doesn't have insight into them," she said.

Despite the prime minister's objections, Havel is expected to deliver the address to parliament in March.

Havel announced his plans for the speech November 13 during a radio broadcast, prompting a heated objection from Klaus, who said news of the president's intentions had taken him by surprise.

The reaction drew criticism from politicians of various stripes, who put aside election-eve rhetoric to defend the president's right to speak to parliament whenever he chooses.

Klaus would not discuss the issue with THE PRAGUE POST, but he told a RUDE PRAVO reporter that the president's proposal "does not correspond to our constitutional system."

The American president makes an annual State of the Union address to Congress. But is it a mistake to compare the Czech president with the U.S. president, Petrova said, because "the Czech president has only about one-tenth the power of the American president."

Jiri Sitler, press spokesman for Havel, read from a constitutional clause that says the president has the right to address the legislature any time he wishes. "The parliament is obliged to answer when the president asks—at any moment when the president asks," he said.

The president "said he would" make the speech next March and is expected to do so, said Sitler. He said Havel and Klaus communicate regularly, "but they didn't talk about this."

A number of observers said the controversy over the speech is merely another flare-up of the smoldering personality differences between Klaus, the intense economist, and Havel, the easygoing dramatist.

Marek Benda, chairman of the deputies' group of the Christian Democratic Party (KDS), said he had no explanation for Klaus' negative reaction to Havel's proposal, except what is common knowledge: "These two people don't really like each other very much."

Benda said he thinks Havel's idea for a speech is good, particularly if it can be prepared in cooperation with the government, instead of merely including the president's personal views on the state of the country.

Bendasaid he isn't sure, however, that such cooperation can occur, given Klaus' initial reaction to the proposal.

Jiri Dienstbier, chairman of the Free Democrats (SD), said the president has every right to address parliament. "It could be very useful if the president gives his views about the development of the Czech state and society."

Tomas Rubacek, deputy chairman of the Christian Democratic Union-Czech People's Party (KDU-CSL), said his party's 16 parliamentary deputies also support Havel in the controversy. "It's his parliament and his constitutional right to speak," Rubacek said. "We would like to hear his opinions on the political situation."

The chairman of the Left Bloc group of deputies, Jaroslav Ortman, said he fully supports the president's speech proposal. "I would consider it absurd if there were limits on what the head of state is able to say in his address to parliament."

Ortman speculated that Klaus may fear being "shown up" by Havel, since the prime minister—now halfway through his four-year term—has yet to come to the parliament with his own speech on how the government is fulfilling its obligations.

Czech, Slovaks Assess Velvet Revolution

95CH0052A Prague PRAGUE POST in English 22 Nov 94 pp 1, 3

[Article by Bill Reynolds: "Half a Decade of Freedom"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] People around the world are still inspired by the Velvet Revolution, in which Czechoslovaks of all ages and backgrounds filled the streets and peacefully won back their freedom. Five years on, you would think Czechs and Slovaks might somehow mark the anniversary.

By and large, they will not.

A police attack on student demonstrators in Prague on November 17, 1989, may have triggered national upheaval and altered the course of Czech and Slovak history, but Thursday, November 17, 1994, will be just another working day for both peoples.

No political leader will deliver a major address, no big public ceremonies are planned, and television will air soap operas and sports, not documentaries and discussions. The public eye is focused on the present and future, not the past.

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For Czechs and Slovaks, life in the pre-November and post-November eras have been so different that the communist era—and even the drama and joy of the revolution itself—has faded into history at best, and to insignificance at worst. The very different day-to-day realities that have taken hold in the successor states to Czechoslovakia—the Czech Republic and Slovakia—leave little time or place for nostalgia.

Czechs and Slovaks, in addition to sharing a reputation as introverted nations, have at least one other common reason for not marking the anniversary: After decades of being forced to refer to their colleagues as "comrade" and to turn out for long parades and long-winded speeches to mark important dates in communist history, they've simply had enough of political holidays.

"Anniversaries are not a natural thing for us to celebrate," said Martin Weiss, a leading columnist for the Czech daily MLADA FRONTA DNES. "That's because the communists were so keen on them."

The grim public mood and the gray cityscapes amid which those red holidays took place are hard to imagine for visitors to today's splashy, neon-lit Prague or the bustling center of Bratislava. But Czechs and Slovaks remember those times all too well.

"I'm trying not to look back," said Lenka Novakova, head librarian at the European Studies Center in Prague, letting out a laugh when asked what her typical day before 1989 was like.

It was the post-revolutionary days that brought out the political, economic and cultural differences between Czechs and Slovaks, and opened the door to the breakup of their federation at the end of 1992. Their experiences today could not be more different.

During the fifth-anniversary week in Slovakia, there is no place for sentiment. The country is effectively leaderless: Former Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar managed to gain control of parliament without being able to form a government. It is the most debilitating political crisis yet in a nation that has done little over the past five years but watch its economy sink as it has lurched from one leadership crisis to another.

"I don't think people forget 1989, but too many things are happening now," said Helga Dingova, an editor at Slovak Radio. "People don't know where the country is going."

In stark contrast, Czech after Czech now speaks of life as being "normal." By that, they not only mean that the transition to a market economy is going well, but that the "Back to Europe" slogan they chanted in November 1989 has come to fruition.

"To be Czech is to be European," said Borek Hnizdo, who heads the political-science department at Charles University in Prague. "There's a feeling that the terrible 20th century is finally over for us."

He added that for Czechs, the first Czechoslovak Republic, the most democratic and prosperous country in Europe between world wars, was "natural." The Nazi occupation and four decades of Russian-imposed communism were not.

Hnizdo said it was important that the Czechoslovak communist regime of the 1970s and '80s permitted no reform—unlike its counterparts in Poland and Hungary. After Soviet tanks crushed the Prague Spring in 1968, Czechs lost all faith that they might have placed in socialism; they could no longer even pretend the system was something of their own invention. There could be no looking back after 1989.

Poll after poll shows a majority of Czechs supporting the hard course toward a market economy charted by Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus. For example, 56 percent of respondents in a poll conducted last month by the Institute for Public Opinion Research believed the task the Klaus government performs best is economic reform, and another poll gave the prime minister a 68 percent approval rating.

"The vast number of people have adapted and found their places in the new circumstances," said MLADA FRONTA DNES' Weiss, an unabashed Klaus supporter. "They've accepted the new rules of labor and the market and are prepared, if necessary, to defend the status quo."

Head librarian Novakova said that the new order has people fully absorbed in earning a living. After five years, a certain leveling of expectations has taken place, she said. For that reason, 1989 seems a lifetime ago.

"It's easy to forget what you consider natural," said Novakova. "Freedom is not wonderful anymore, it's normal."

Prosperity has given Czechs the luxury of deciding where their country is heading. Most commentators agree that, in practical terms, this means following the vision of either Klaus or President Vaclav Havel, the two men who have come to personify the post-revolutionary era.

The outlook of Klaus, the brash and extraordinarily confident former banker, can be summed up by a statement he made in September in a speech at the Prague School of Economics:

"The stage that is before us will not be one of fundamental changes, but instead a period of cultivation of markets and private enterprise, a period during which private entrepreneurs and markets definitely take up their role, a period in which the economic heroes will no longer be politicians and state officials but business people."

Havel, the soft-spoken playwright and former dissident who led the 1989 revolution by telling his countrymen that "truth and love will prevail over lies and hatred," has never ceased calling for a "civil society" in which citizens fully participate in all spheres of public life. In a speech October 28, the state holiday marking the 1918 founding of Czechoslovakia, he said the Czech Republic could only move in one of two directions.

"We may content ourselves with what has been accomplished, say a few fine words of gratification and then lapse into a rather insane state of waiting for whatever

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good, or not so good, things all the systemic changes may bring us," he said, outlining the first possibility.

Havel's preferred direction involved "a new vision."

He said this required "talking in all earnestness about the nature of the democracy we want to nurture, the roots from which it should grow, the spirit that should guide it and the direction it should take. By the same token, serious thought should be given to what concrete steps are to be taken in an environment of a restored market economy, at all the different levels, in order to turn its achievements to universal benefit."

By all accounts, Klaus has the upper hand. Havel, whose intellectual colleagues from the revolution have long since left public life, is almost universally regarded as being on the fringes power.

Weiss quickly dismissed the intellectual sniping at Klaus in newspaper columns.

"The decline of culture is a myth," he said. "There is a small group of intellectuals who can't accommodate themselves to the fact that they don't have a place in authority, or that people can be happy."

Hnizdo, a fan of both Klaus and Havel, was resigned to the prime minister's dominance.

"The lack of intellectual influence says it is not urgent that (intellectuals) guide the nation," he said. "There's a general feeling that changes in things like the environment and civil liberties must be part of the more common change over time."

Readmission Agreement With Germany Signed

95CH0050B Prague PROGNOSIS WEEKLY in English 16 Nov 94 p 8

[Article by R.L.: "Czech Republic Signs Readmission Agreements"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Czech Republic finally signed agreements dealing with the return of illegal immigrants to Germany and Hungary last week, after nearly a year and a half of negotiations.

Under the Czech-German agreement, the Czech Republic will be required to receive illegal migrants returned from Germany only if German authorities find them within six months of their crossing the border and send them back within six months of finding them. Additionally, Germany must prove the migrants entered the country through the Czech Republic.

Negotiations on a readmission agreement began in July 1993, when Germany tightened its internal asylum laws. Due to Germany's stricter asylum requirements, the number of illegal migrants caught crossing from the Czech Republic into Germany has already dropped dramatically, from nearly 30,000 last year to fewer than 10,000 in the first nine months of 1994.

German Interior Minister Manfred Kanther hailed the agreement as a "great success."

Last week Czech and German ministers also signed three related agreements on border matters. Germany will grant the Czech Republic 1.68 billion Kc ($60 million US) for administrative costs for the returned-immigrant processing required by the readmission agreement, and will also provide more advanced detection equipment to Czech border police.

The Czech Republic had refused to sign a readmission agreement with Germany until it could tighten control of its border with Slovakia. Hungary had refused to discuss the issue with the Czech Republic until it could sign a readmission agreement with neighboring Romania, which it did last year.

Czech Firms Interested in Eastern Trade

95CH0052C Prague PRAGUE POST in English 22 Nov 94 p 7

[Article by Maggie Ledford Lawson: "Czechs Taking Second Look at East"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Five years after the Czech Republic began severing its ties to Moscow, many of the biggest companies here still have links to the countries of the former Soviet Union—for better or for worse.

Although the trading pendulum for Czech companies has swung from East to West, many Czech companies are taking a new look at their old trading partners in Russia.

Trade with Russia now stands at roughly one-sixth what it was at the time of the 1989 revolution. But the Czech government is encouraging the revival of trade ties with Russia as a tonic for companies that have more capacity than customers.

Czech exports to Russia in 1993 totaled some 1.7 billion Kc ($63 million), while imports—80 percent of which were gas, oil and chemicals—were 3.7 billion Kc, according to data from the Czech Statistical Office. About 35 percent of Czech exports were processed chemicals, the rest being machinery, textiles, consumer goods and foodstuffs.

The Russian market offers substantial room for growth, according to Czech ambassador to Moscow Rudolf Slansky. He said one of his main jobs is smoothing the way for Czech enterprises wishing to do business there.

"Small contracts are possible—someone might buy one truck of chocolates or textiles, but it's difficult to find serious partners" with money for substantial investments, said Slansky.

Hoping to foster Czech exports, the government is negotiating with the Russians to bring down tariffs on certain items, and is working to change certification requirements that some firms in this country consider onerous.

Even with such assistance, Czech businesses face huge problems doing business in a country still recovering from the political earthquake that brought down communism.

The biggest problem: Russian companies are often slow to pay back what they owe. According to the Czech

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Statistical Office, Russian firms owe private Czech companies $300 million in debt contracted since 1990.

In addition, there's crime. A number of exporters, particularly those shipping beer or wine, report that their trucks have been robbed in transit. Many companies now require partial payment in advance of delivery of goods.

And then there are the shady dealers.

One example: A Russian businessman signed a letter of intent to enter a partnership with a Czech firm, and was invited on an expenses-paid visit to this country to finalize the deal. The man spent a lovely few days here, then disappeared, trade officials say.

Petr Tumpach, manager of the export division of Svit Zlin, which exports shoes to Russia, said his company has avoided many problems by taking a Russian partner.

"Permanent contacts help a lot," he said, but quickly added, "I can't say the company hasn't had bad experiences."

But Russian trade boosters say the benefits outweigh the risks.

"The need for goods is really enormous, and Czech firms have an advantage because their products tend to be priced lower than similar merchandise from Western countries," said Tatjana Reiterova, assistant to the president of Cechros, an association set up in January to promote trade between the two countries.

The association, which already lists 130 companies from Slovakia and Russia as well as the Czech Republic, organizes activities such as trade fairs and business trips designed to bring potential trading partners together.

Last month, the association sponsored a trade mission to Novosibirsk, a city in western Siberia, which was attended by representatives of 22 Czech firms, including Strojexport, a machine trading company; Tesla Karlin, a telephone exchange provider; and Kara Trutnov, a producer of leather and furs. Reiterova said the visit is expected to result in about a dozen contracts.

Cechros also serves another function by helping businesses steer clear of potential problems that can accompany trade in a country where the post-communist economy continues to be a shambles.

The association is developing lists of firms that have proved unreliable, and producing a number of anecdotes of deals gone wrong.

The Czech and Russian governments have agreements in place that are supposed to protect investors, but many of the cautionary measures are left up to individual firms.

Locating people with the money to pay for merchandise is perhaps the biggest problem facing exporters.

"Much depands on the capital we have at our disposal," said Ivan Pantelejev, head of the Russian trade office in the Czech Republic.

Tomas Husak, assistant deputy minister at the Ministry of Industry and Trade, said the government is trying to make it easier for firms to do business in Russia.

Negotiations are under way to try to get Russia to lower some taxes required for the import of goods. Wine and beer are among the products hardest hit by the protective tariffs in Russia. "We have certain promises from the Russians that the duties will decrease," said Husak.

Another sore point with Czech firms is the certification required for selling goods in Russia, which often entails detailed questioning into areas that some Czech companies consider proprietary.

The Russian government has agreed to allow the Czech government to issue the certificates, which are required to prevent shoddy goods from being pawned off on Russian consumers.

"We need laws that protect consumers and companies, but we have only started to do it," said Pantelejev. "We are working very hard."

Growth of Export to West Noted

95CH0052B Prague PRAGUE POST in English 22 Nov 94 p 6

[Article by Michele Kayal: "Exports to West on the Rise"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Before 1989, Prague-based Strojexport sent 80 percent of its mining machines, lifting equipment, road-making contraptions and railroad cars to the Soviet Union, and not a fraction of its goods showed up outside Eastern markets. In 1993, more than half the company's export revenues came from the West.

"There is a general trend of business now with the West, not the East," said Rene Ponik, assistant to Strojexport's general director.

In the five years since the collapse of the Soviet Union and its trading bloc, Comecon, the nations of Eastern Europe have spurned their old trading partners and bolted for Western markets.

In the region that includes the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria, more than 50 percent of all trade now takes place with European Union countries, while business with former comrades has slipped more than 40 percent from its 1990 figure. The region still faces some important problems in its drive toward Western markets, but analysts say the overall picture is positive.

"The Central European countries have offset the collapse of the Eastern markets with trade in the West," said Sandor Richter, a research fellow at the Vienna Institute for Comparative Economic Studies. "Many sources point to Western Europe as the strongest potential area to export to and import from.... (These countries) will go on looking at Western Europe."

Focusing on the West has brought the region more total trade than it had before 1989, say Richter and other

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analysts. Growth in exports—which mostly include semifinished products and machinery as well as a smaller portion of consumer goods—comes in at 10 percent, according to economists at the J.P. Morgan & Co. investment bank.

Poland last year led the pack with an increase of nearly 20 percent in its exports. And imports of Eastern goods by the Western industrialized nations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) rose a whopping 42 percent between 1989 and 1992.

But while these countries are selling more to the West, they are also buying more—more TVs, cars, refrigerators, washing machines and the other status symbols of Western life. Western exports to the region have increased 63 percent since 1989, with most coming from the EU (European Union), according to the Austrian Institute of Economic Research. The flood has landed these infant market economies with a collective trade deficit on their EU balance sheet that some analysts find worrisome.

"These countries have to look at their own competitiveness," said Geoffrey Hamilton, a regional adviser at the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe.

Protectionist measures imposed by the EU on commodities such as steel, textiles and agriculture—some of Central Europe's most important products—present another hurdle for these countries in their westward course. According to economists, recent actions against Czech cement producers and the increasing use of nontariff restrictions throughout the region show that the EU has been quick to react when it perceives a threat from the East.

"In general, the accusations are not justified," said Jan Stankovsky, a senior researcher at the economic institute. "In all of these countries, subsidies are lower than in Western countries. The real problem is that wages are one-tenth of Western wages."

A lack of experience in navigating Western trade channels and a faulty or nonexistent system of trade support structures, such as export banks and insurance systems, also stand between these countries and their new target markets.

Western Europe's stubborn recession and decreased demand also cut into the East's early progress, and some psychological barriers persist. To many Westerners, goods from Eastern Europe still have the same shabby connotation that the label "Made in Japan" used to have decades ago.

"Westerners are used to their own products. They know each other and they're hesitant to buy products from Eastern Europe," said Strojexport's Ponik. "The propaganda is still in our brains."

But recent changes hint that these problems are not here to stay. As Western Europe's recession recedes and demand begins to rise, Eastern Europe has begun to benefit, as the growing export figures show. And while the trade deficit of these nations has not let up, the type of goods they are importing has shifted toward machinery and other engines of industrial modernization that promise future development.

"This year there has been a rise in investment goods—machinery, equipment, things to improve your fixed assets," said Susanne Gahler, a J.P. Morgan economist for Eastern Europe. "Some of the industries that are expanding are export industries, so what you import now may create bigger exports later."

EU association agreements signed with six Central European countries in 1992 and 1993 also aim to create a free-trade zone between the EU and Central Europe by 2001, a change that will squelch some of the current protectionist measures and strengthen East-West ties.

Central Europe as a whole is moving closer to the West, but some of the large, former state-owned trading companies are looking beyond their nearest borders to Asia. A recent Czech trade mission to Southeast Asia returned with contracts for diesel generators, mining equipment and other heavy machinery that totaled $594 million. While Strojexport's Ponik admitted that most of his company's current trade is with the West, he stressed that its eyes are wandering toward other partners. "India is our nearest goal," he said.

According to most analysts, Western Europe will remain the East's most important import and export market for years to come. But it doesn't hurt to look. Said J.P. Morgan economist Gahler: "There's only so much they'll get out of the EU."

Scandal Rocks Coupon Privatization

95CH0050A Prague PROGNOSIS WEEKLY in English 16 Nov 94 p 5

[Article by Robert McLean and Hana Lesenarova: "Bribe Case Turns 'Economic Miracle' Sour"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It should have been so easy. The final round of the legendary coupon privatization scheme was supposed to take just a week, sending the most important symbol of the Czech economic miracle safely into the history books just days before crucial, nationwide local elections.

Instead, in a midnight sting operation, special anti-terrorist forces arrested Jaroslav Lizner, head of the Coupon Privatization Center, as he walked out of a restaurant carrying a suitcase containing more than 8 million Kc ($286,000 US). Lizner was charged with accepting a bribe in return for influencing the outcome of the sale of shares in the southern Bohemian dairy Mlekarna Klatovy.

Now, more than a week into the affair, details on the case remain sketchy and the only full account of the scandal is an unconfirmed article published by the investigative weekly RESPEKT.

The Interior Ministry has confirmed only that Mlekarna Klatovy was involved and that as of November 8, the original charges of bribery were still going to stick.

"I'm terribly upset by this. It's as if someone poured dishwater on my child," said Tomas Jezek, the self-proclaimed father of coupon privatization.

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Since his arrest, Lizner has made no public statements, and police have only released a skeleton outline of the case.

Citing its own "trustworthy sources," RESPEKT claims Lizner was involved in a complicated scheme to sell shares of the dairy to Trans World International (which sells milk products to the Middle East) with the help of the mutual fund CS Fond, which won 20 percent of Mlekarna Klatovy in coupon privatization.

According to RESPEKT, CS Fond was to help TWI (Trans World International) gain a majority stake in the dairy and at some point, under as yet unknown circumstances, Lizner was enlisted to help in the venture.

Police said they nabbed Lizner while he was carrying a dark suitcase filled with 8,334,500 Kc out of the Asia restaurant—just a few blocks away from the Interior Ministry. They also took the two representatives of CS Fond he had dined with and one official who reportedly introduced himself as Lubos Sotona, head of TWI.

Only Lizner has actually been charged, and he remains in custody. Police searched his palatial Prague 6 villa, reportedly driving his wife to a nervous breakdown.

Lizner, 44, is known as a deft chess player and a computer whiz. He was an official in the Finance Ministry under the Communist regime. In June 1991, he became director of the Center for Coupon Privatization. He also sat on an exclusive three-member commission responsible for setting the price of shares in each successive round.

The anti-corruption division of the Czech Police said it had been preparing the raid for about two weeks. Subert said that during the investigation the department obtained information about the exact location and time of the payment and RESPEKT wrote that TWI had tipped off police to the deal after Lizner got greedy, raising his take from 4 million Kc to more than 8 million.

According to the Czech penal code, public officials convicted of taking bribes can be sentenced to up to five years in prison, as can those offering the bribe.

Experts suspect that Lizner used his position and programming skills to call up information that the CS Fond or TWI could exploit. One theory is that he managed to get a list of individuals who received shares in the dairy before this information became public knowledge.

TWI could potentially use this list by contacting those on the list and offering to buy their shares for an agreed price.

Despite his position, Lizner would not normally have access to such information. Passing it along to another company would be grounds for legal proceedings.

Tomas Chrz, board chair of CS Fond, originally refused to make any further comments on the case, after admitting in a statement that employees of his company had attended the meeting with Lizner. But in a change of tack, he called PROGNOSIS WEEKLY to deny any involvement in the bribe.

"The appearance of the suitcase and the police was like a bomb going off," said Chrz.

Still it is difficult to imagine that Lizner was handed a suitcase with millions of crowns in it without being noticed by the CS Fond employees. Denying that he was at the restaurant with Lizner, TWI President Lubos Sotona said his company was not involved in any way. "No one from TWI was at the dinner with Dr. Lizner, and I never even spoke to him personally," he told the Czech daily MLADA FRONTA DNES.

Many computer experts responsible for the actual running of coupon privatization claim that the system is so carefully guarded that not even Lizner could break into it. But even if Lizner received a commission for mediating negotiations between TWI and CS Fond, he would still face criminal proceedings as state officials are prohibited from such activities.

Predictably, the rumor mill has been churning out sex and secret agent theories. Behind on the story, the daily LIDOVE NOVINY wrote repeatedly that one TWI representative was a former high-ranking official of the Communist secret police (StB) force who was somehow involved in shady activities in Libya (perhaps pushing the TWI-Persian Gulf connection).

MLADA FRONTA DNES quoted an anonymous financial "expert" as saying an extramarital affair had driven Lizner to desperation. "That woman is behind everything, because of her he is capable of committing the greatest idiocy," said the source.

The case has clearly rocked public confidence, as it has consistently landed on the front page of most dailies. Fifty-four percent of those who responded to a call-in poll by the popular tabloid BLESK said the case had shaken their trust in coupon privatization.

As the maelstrom of accusations and innuendo raged, politicians on all levels tried to soothe investors, saying that coupon privatization could not be threatened by the arrest of a single person. Czech Premier Vaclav Klaus called the arrest a "bolt out of the blue" and said, "It has nothing directly to do with coupon privatization."

But Jezek admitted his own doubts about the computer system that makes the system possible. A hole in its defenses could have disastrous consequences, he said, because "Lizner had access to everything."

Germans Purchase Best-Selling Newspaper

95CH0066B Prague PRAGUE POST in English 29 Nov 94 p 2

[Article by Melissa Morrison: "Foreign Media Takeovers Leave Some Journalists Nervous"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The purchase of yet another Czech newspaper by a foreign company has prompted fears among journalists and others that the republic will be unable to prevent unfair foreign control of local media.

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Germany's Rheinisch-Bergische Druckerei und Verlagsgesellschaft mbH purchased 52 percent of the Czech Republic's best-selling newspaper, MLADA FRONTA DNES, that newspaper reported November 10.

The transaction gave the German company a controlling interest in the daily. It shows that foreign control of local media is continuing despite some observers' fears of outsiders unduly influencing the still-young democracy. Over half of the Czech Republic's papers are owned or partially owned by foreigners.

"I think everybody is concerned," said Milada Cholujova, director of Prague's Center for Independent Journalism. "What I hear from people is concern that there's not enough Czech capital to own the paper."

Cholujova also said the center, which advises Czech reporters and editors, was hearing fears that the country's laws weren't complete enough to prevent unfair foreign control.

However, MLADA FRONTA DNES Editor-in-Chief Petr Sabata said the new owner would not influence the paper's news coverage or operations.

Foreign ownership is not new to the paper, which recently succeeded the tabloid BLESK as the best-selling paper in the country, according to Press Association figures. The German company bought its shares from France's Socpresse Paris (Groupe Hersant), which had owned 51 percent—a majority share—of MLADA FRONTA DNES since the summer. Before the summer, Socpresse owned 48 percent of the Czech daily.

Sabata said he welcomed the German owners, because Socpresse had had financial difficulties. In fact, in September, Socpresse also divested itself of papers it owned in Hungary and Poland, according to LIDOVE NOVINY.

Another German company, Passauer Neue Presse, immediately bought eight of the Polish dailies and two printing presses, LIDOVE NOVINY reported, demonstrating that foreign ownership is also common in other emerging democracies of Central Europe.

Passauer Neue Presse also controls most of the Czech Republic's regional papers, including 27 in Bohemia.

LIDOVE NOVINY is itself owned by Ringier of Switzerland, which is also the parent company of BLESK.

Strasky on Goals of Ministry of Transport

95CH0066A Prague PRAGUE POST in English 29 Nov 94 p 6

[Article by Lubomir Sedlak: "Transport Restructuring Moving Full Speed Ahead"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] *Minister of Transport Jan Strasky speaks to THE PRAGUE POST about the difficulties of modernizing and restructuring a transportation system inherited from the communists, and about the ministry's plans for the future—including environmentally friendly schemes to increase the amount of rail versus road traffic and to encourage Czechs to continue favoring public transport over personal automobiles.*

Planes, trains and automobiles can be a thorny area for a developing economy.

Transport Minister Jan Strasky has been involved in some of the toughest issues: ending the relationship between Czechoslovak Airlines (CSA) and Air France, privatizing the Czech railroad system, seeking for highway construction and calculating higher taxes for the nation's truck traffic.

Strasky declines to talk about one of the most controversial moves of his administration: the end of the unhappy marriage between Air France and CSA in March.

"Let bygones be bygones," he says, adding that CSA—which dipped sharply into the red last year when it was still tied to the French carrier—seems to be doing fairly well this year, with monthly profits returning early this summer.

"When your company's losses are falling, isn't that good?" he asks. "CSA's losses have dropped to a third of what they were a year ago. I can openly say that the carrier's position is improving thanks to its new management."

CSA has not been Strasky's only headache during his almost two years in office. Strasky notes that after the 1989 revolution, the country inherited a low-quality road network and an obsolete, overburdened rail system as well as an airline composed of a fleet of Soviet-made planes.

In addition, the country was burdened with the task of switching its transportation system over from one in which the main transport flow consisted of overloaded trains heading east to one with trucks clogging the trade routes to the west.

In such a context, Strasky suggests, the idea of linking arms with the debt-ridden Air France did not seem as bad a deal as it does in retrospect. Air France, a state-run company charged with aiding in the privatization of the state-run CSA, was forced out of the joint venture in March.

"The idea of going into cooperation with the French airline originated in an economic situation that totally differed from the one this spring, when the two companies went their own ways," Strasky says. "I don't want to assess whose fault it was that they parted, but I think it was a positive thing that they did. The fact remains that Air France has its own problems."

CSA's problems, however, aren't over.

Since the breakup with Air France, CSA has approached several U.S. air companies, including Delta, American and United, with a proposal to operate some lines in joint cooperation. But the ministry has so far found no takers.

Strasky, meanwhile, seems to be turning more of his attention to surface rather than air transportation. He takes pride in the fact that by the end of this year, his ministry will have accomplished total privatization of

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Czech road transportation. It has also laid out detailed plans for railroad privatization.

What's next? The top items on Strasky's agenda for the next five years are the modernization of the rail corridors linking Prague to Berlin and Vienna and the reconstruction of the Prague airport. By 2010, Strasky predicts the Czech highway network will have tripled in total length to 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles) and that construction on a high-speed railroad system will have begun.

But all of those projects are going to cost money. Strasky says that the money spent on transportation infrastructure in the next five to 10 years will equal the current annual Czech budget. Funding such projects will require higher user fees on Czech roads—one of the topics that Strasky discussed recently with THE PRAGUE POST.

THE PRAGUE POST: What are the biggest problems your ministry is currently dealing with?

Jan Strasky: One of the main problems is harmonizing the various modes of transportation. In order to have competition in transportation, the terms for doing business in those various modes should be the same. At present, Czech Railways officials are complaining, and with justification, that they have to finance all track repairs, while in the case of roads, the state pays for most highway maintenance.

The truth is that rail transport in the Czech Republic, as compared to road transport, is not really competitive, and (passenger traffic) is heavily subsidized—to the tune of more than 8 billion KC ($296 million) a year.

Another big problem is improving the transportation infrastructure. We have already started a highway construction program, we are about to begin modernizing the main railroad lines, we will renovate Prague's airport and so forth.

A third problem is preserving an optimal proportion between the individual and mass transportation now that we have a market economy. We really would like to keep the current level of mass transportation. The government earmarked 1 billion Kc in next year's state budget for this purpose. Currently, 72 percent of Czechs travel to work using mass transit rather than cars. Elsewhere in Europe, this figure is half that, and the governments are trying to raise it. The tendency today is to protect towns and cities from the growth of individual car transportation.

But the biggest drawback of transportation, as compared to other sectors of the Czech economy, is that its key "subsectors"—such as the railroads—largely still have not gone through the process of transformation.

PRAGUE POST: Railroads seem to be in a particularly bad state today. In what ways, apart from privatization and substantial investment, will it be possible to raise them to the level of developed Western nations?

J.S.: For one thing, I would reverse the order of importance and put investment before privatization. Regarding investment, we have already started modernizing the so-called first rail corridor, linking Berlin, Prague and Vienna. This reconstruction, which will be completed before the end of the century, will cost more than 30 billion Kc.

Apart from investment and privatization, I would name two other ways of helping our railroads.

First, there's "combined" transportation, using both the roads and the rails. At present, this usually means putting trucks onto rail cars. We have already started operating two such lines. But in the near future, railroads will use the more advanced method of transporting containers that would be taken from trucks onto trains and then unloaded and put onto other trucks once the train reached its destination.

Second, harmonizing the various modes of transport should help put the railroads on competitive terms with trucks, barges and other forms of transportation.

PRAGUE POST: What is the ideal ratio between rail and road transportation for freight—especially given that railroads are more environmentally sensitive than road traffic?

J.S.: Railroads already carry a higher share of the country's freight than most people think—more than 60 percent, due mainly to the fact that trains are transporting bulk commodities such as coal, gravel and sand, although the volume of these commodities has been falling in the past few years.

The share of road transport is rising somewhat, because it operates on smaller distances—for distances under 150 kilometers (90 miles), it pays to use a truck rather than a train—and also as a result of trucks passing through the country on their way to other destinations.

Let me say that in the future, there should not be any growth in road transit across our country. As regards domestic transportation, I do not think it is going to grow much in the future, with, for instance, all the cuts in coal mining after 1989.

In terms of the environment, the answer is to move at least part of the freight from roads to rails or even rivers and canals, although there are just 303 kilometers of navigable waterways in this country—accounting for just 1 percent of total freight transportation—as compared to some 10,000 kilometers of railroads.

After decades of a certain scorn, governments in the most developed countries, such as Germany, are now turning to railroads again. The reason is not economic but environmental.

PRAGUE POST: Could some freight be moved from roads to rail by taxing the road haulage more heavily?

J.S.: Yes. Definitely. It is, in fact, a must. Just look at the figures. In 1989, a total of 400,000 trucks moving to or from Germany and Austria alone crossed the Czech Republic in transit, while four year later, the figure was 2 million. This country simply cannot be a territory with an unregulated volume of road freight transport.

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Taxing (road transport) is an overall tendency in Europe. In the Czech Republic, corporations have in fact already been paying a road tax for the past three years, but in the future, it will be individuals as well, especially those who use the roads frequently. Starting next year, all passenger-car drivers will be obliged to pay an annual highway tax of 400 Kc a year, and in the case of trucks, the sum will be either 1,000 or 2,000 Kc, depending on their tonnage.

PRAGUE POST: Highway construction seems to be progressing slowly. Is lack of finances the main problem?

J.S.: I don't think the construction of highways in this country is proceeding slowly. The problem is that in a democracy, you cannot simply rule which route a highway will take. People want new highways to be built and they want them close to their homes, but not too close. That means preliminary work on projects for new highways is at present taking longer, but the actual construction is faster.

A highway to Nuremberg is to be finished by 1997, with the segment between Prague and Plzen opening next year. A bypass around Plzen will open in either 1998 or 1999. Regarding another highway, to Dresden and on to Berlin, we have not yet reached the stage where we know the precise terms, because we are still holding talks with Germany on subjects such as exactly where the highway would cross the frontier. But in general, I would say that it should open by 2001.

[Box, p 6]

Jan Strasky, Minister of Transport

Born: December 24, 1940

Studied: Economy and philosophy at the Philosophical Faculty, Charles University, Prague. Graduated in 1970.

First job: Regional branch of the Ceskoslovenska Statni banka, a predecessor of the Czech National Bank, in Blovice.

Political career: Active in the dissident movement before November 1989, Starsky became deputy general director of Komercni banks on January 1, 1990 and deputy prime minister of the Czech Republic in June 1991. In July 1992, he was appointed premier of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and a year later, he served briefly as acting president. Since January 1, 1993, he has been Czech transport minister. Since 1992, Strasky has also been deputy chairman of the ruling Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and a member of the parliament for ODS.

Personal life: Strasky and his wife, Bozena, have three children: Jozef, Lucie and Jan.

Pollution Damages Forests in Republic

95CH0050C Prague PROGNOSIS WEEKLY in English 16 Nov 94 p 3

[Article by H.L.: "Czech Forests Half Dead"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] More forests are damaged in the Czech Republic than in any other country in Europe, according to a recent United Nations report.

The German weekly FOCUS published a table compiled by the UN Economic Commission for Europe that claims as much as 53 percent of forest land in the Czech Republic is seriously damaged as a result of pollution. Moldavia was the second-worst offender, with 51 percent of its forests damaged; Poland came in third, with half of its forests heavily damaged.

The 38-percent statistic for neighboring Slovakia, however, was closer to that of West European countries, which averaged between 24 and 33 percent of their forests destroyed.

Ivan Zlabek, director of the Sumava National Park, said that industrial emission is the foremost cause of the destruction of Czech forests. But he isn't alarmed by the new report.

"I wouldn't say it is critical. I don't agree that the forests are really dying throughout the whole country. That only concerns the region of northern Bohemia," Zlabek said.

In the north Bohemian "Black Triangle," the chemical industry, heavy industry and mining for brown coal have decimated the environment.

Karel Kopecny, director of forestry economics at the Ministry of Agriculture, said the average person would not be able to tell a damaged forest from a healthy one.

"This doesn't mean that 50 percent are actually dying," Kopecny said. "There are four different grades of evaluating it. But on the other hand, there are also woodlands that a layman would probably find quite healthy, though in fact the trees have their needles for only three years instead of five or six."

"Unfortunately, emissions are still being produced and our forests are slowly drying up and disappearing," he said.

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Presidency Seen as Vladimir Meciar's Aim

95CH0068A Prague PROGNOSIS WEEKLY in English 23 Nov 94 p 2

[Article by Wade Daniels: "The 'Besting' of Slovakia's Ministers"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bratislava—Slovakia's cabinet ministers are dangling in a political nether-world.

Isolated by the machinations of prime minister-designate Vladimir Meciar but constitutionally bound to remain at their posts, the ministers remain functionally neutered as Slovakia drifts further into political paralysis.

Since retaking power in elections last month, Meciar has worked to: pick a cabinet that can't harm him politically; transfer certain ministerial powers to bodies he controls; and gleefully watch the old ministers squirm until he chooses to dismiss them.

"Meciar is besting those ministers," said Igor Uhrik, a Slovak-American political analyst who has worked as an advisor to Privatization Minister Milan Janacins. "He can wait on replacing them because he has what he needs—a lame cabinet that's been made even lamer, hobbling on one leg and now on both."

Meciar hasn't spelled out any strategy behind his maneuvering, but to analysts and opponents his actions are fairly straightforward: He's building an apparatus to assure that his third election to prime minister won't end in a third booting from office. (His first ouster occurred in 1991, and the second last spring, when a flock of parliamentary friends joined the opposition.)

More than this, Meciar "would like to make it so that all of Slovakia's future problems can be blamed on the (preceding) cabinet," said Anton Hrnto, a parliament deputy for the anti-Meciar Democratic Union (DU). "it's not possible to fulfill all his campaign promises and he doesn't want to be guilty for this."

Support for the theory seems evident in statements by Jan Luptak, leader of the Workers' Party (ZRS), which has entered into a loose alliance with Meciar. Luptak has said he doesn't want any of his party's members included in the next cabinet because all the decisions that need to be made will necessarily be unpopular ones, and thus he can't support them.

Meanwhile, Meciar has weakened some of the cabinet's vital powers, leaving it even higher and drier. Notably, he shifted powers over the privatization process from the Privatization Ministry to the state's official property owner, the Fund of National Property, whose staff he can direct.

Indeed, the cabinet's influence has diminished so much that Slovak Television has curtailed its weekly cabinet wrap-up, saying an hour a week is too much time to report such little action.

Meciar, whose Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) topped the vote last month with 35 percent, has said he won't form a government that is politically unstable for him.

This sought-for lock on power would not only serve to preempt a third ouster from office, but it could facilitate Meciar's ascent to the politically safe presidency.

"That would be a home run for him, to become president where he can't be touched by political opponents," said Uhrik.

To this end, Meciar has sought to construct a two-thirds majority support in Parliament (the proportion needed to change the constitution) to vote with him on at least the issue of altering the nature of the presidency.

Technical points are already being argued, but essentially all the moves Meciar is making are constitutional, legitimized by his public support. However, other politicians and observers are quietly bracing for what is being described as a cool backslide to the days of totalitarianism.

Juraj Kohutiar, the international secretary for the Christian Democratic Union, points out the possible adoption of what Meciar calls a law on the "protection of the republic." Meciar pitched it to Parliament in 1992 but was rebuffed. It would have criminalized anything construed as "anti-Slovak," including the reports of journalists.

"They could very well bring that back and try to pass it," Kohutiar said. "This is why we believe democracy is at stake."

Students Demonstrate Against Meciar

95CH0065A Prague PRAGUE POST in English 29 Nov 94 pp 1, 3

[Article by Timea Spitkova: "Student Demonstrators Decry Slovak Government Purges"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bratislava—Exactly five years after student demonstrations ignited the 1989 revolution, Slovaks were back in the streets telling their leaders to do a better job.

More than 10,000 young and old citizens attended student-led demonstrations in Bratislava and Kosice, and smaller gatherings filled town squares throughout the country.

The gatherings were officially staged to commemorate the anniversary of the revolution and to protest the removal of Comenius University rector Juraj Svec from the parliamentary committee for education and science. But they were dominated by criticism of former Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, who recently led the Slovak parliament to purge a large number of his political enemies, including Svec.

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Speakers in Bratislava told the supportive crowd that the fight for democracy is not over.

"In the last elections, the voters chose extremists—and extremists are behaving in an extreme fashion," said Tono Popovic, a student leader in the 1989 revolution.

The handful of students who organized the demonstration had insisted on a non-partisan event, but all the speakers indicated a strong distaste for the present political situation. Posters saying "Stop Meciarism" and otherwise protesting Meciar's leadership floated above the demonstrators' heads.

Speakers, including students, professors and leaders of the 1989 revolution, demanded an end to the ongoing "fight for power" and warned Slovak citizens to keep a watchful eye on nondemocratic tendencies among some political groups.

"Otherwise, we are dependent on explanations from adventurous and primitive politicians," said Popovic, "and their picture of democracy is the dictatorship of the majority."

Martin Machrik, a 20-year-old science student, said that he was there to demonstrate his frustration with the political situation in Slovakia.

"They are putting pressure on democratic principles," said Machrik. "It is our duty to express our distaste in this way."

In Kosice, Arpad Soltesz told a crowd of almost 10,000 people that the attempts of November 1989 to achieve democracy, tolerance and freedom of speech had been in vain: "All that remains is what we see around us."

Students in Bratislava and elsewhere expressed outrage over the removal of Svec from the parliamentary committee for education and science.

"The removal of Professor Svec was the final drop that made the glass overflow," said Tomas Szalay, a key organizer of the Bratislava event.

Svec, the only political figure to appear onstage in Bratislava, was welcomed with tremendous applause.

"When I look at you, I know that I don't have to worry, that democracy will continue," exclaimed a grateful Svec.

Following the rally, the students met with legislators in their parliamentary offices and handed them a petition, signed by over 3,000 university students, asking that Svec be returned to the education and science committee.

"We are also rejecting hatred and revenge of any type or form in parliament and elsewhere," read the statement, which demanded that politicians in parliament respect morality and the constitution of the Slovak Republic.

The students expressed their anger and distaste over what has been dubbed the "night of long knives," when the newly emerged parliamentary coalition purged dozens of political opponents from key posts in a series of moves that have been called unconstitutional.

"Meciar doesn't look to the left or right, he just steamrolls," said Szalay. "This is not the road to democracy.

Representatives of the Democratic Union (DU), the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the Democratic Left Party (SDL) said they support the petition and promised to bring up the issue to rethink Svec's removal.

"You could not have accomplished something more impressive than you did tonight," said Mikulas Dzurinda, a deputy for the KDH.

Upon learning that foreign journalists were present, HZDS representative Vitazoslav Moric couldn't decide whether he had been in his office or not.

"I was not here," Moric told THE PRAGUE POST. "Wait," he corrected a moment later. "I am here and I'm proud to be here."

Moric said that his party would not change its stance on the mass dismissals, despite the protests.

"It would be very bad it every group came to voice their interests," said Moric, unimpressed by the number of student signatures.

The students who organized the rally and the petition were thrilled to see such strong support at a time when apathy is prevalent, especially among the student population.

"The stronger the pressure, the shorter (the time) this situation will last," said Szalay, who is planning another demonstration for Human Rights Day December 10.

"We will come here, our dear politicians, so that we may monitor your actions," Szalay told the cheering crowd in Bratislava.

State-Funded Radio, TV Controlled by HZDS

95CH0051A Prague PROGNOSIS WEEKLY in English 16 Nov 94 p 5

[Article by Jana Dorotkova: "Meciar's Party Taking Control of Slovak Media"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Slovak Prime Minister-designate Vladimir Meciar, the head of the resurgent Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), is translating his success in Slovakia's October elections into influence over state-run TV and radio.

The editor of the political section of Slovak TV's news department was demoted to reporter November 8 because of "biased coverage of Friday's Parliament session," government spokesman Lubomir Lintner said.

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He also said that the STV director has decided to cancel its regular television debate program, called "Pressclub," in which the government informs the public about its actions. Meciar's party has yet to step into the government, but is expected to begin claiming Cabinet posts within the next month.

"It's getting interesting, you wait," he said, nodding and giving a deep sigh. Lintner himself had been the chief news editor at Slovak Radio before Meciar's last government, which was ousted in the spring, fired him a year ago.

Meciar and his supporters show concrete signs that they are ready to begin taking control of all state-funded media outlets. There is no private television in Slovakia, and Slovak Radio is an important source of radio news.

"Every election winner needs to have influence over the media," said Eva Slavkovska of the Slovak National Party, an HZDS ally.

A reporter from the Slovak TV news department, who did not want to be named, described the mood there as very tense. She said many of her colleagues expected changes and restrictions, but added that at least it couldn't be any worse than under communism.

"Mostly bright people work here, they won't get lost," she said. "I'm calm. I'm ready to work as a cleaning lady any time."

At the first Parliament sesson November 3, Meciar returned to power with a vengeance. He replaced senior officials in most of the Parliament-elected bodies overnight and changed the regulations for privatization. With the support of the Slovak National Party and the Association of Slovak Workers, Meciar also removed TV and radio supervisory councils.

Deputies who were not allied with Meciar walked out in protest. Outgoing Premier Jozef Moravcik accused Meciar of abusing his power and jeopardizing democracy in the country.

In another bid to purge his political rivals or adversaries from the media, HZDS also replaced Slovak Radio Director Vladimir Stefko, who had already had conflicts with Meciar's last Cabinet, with Meciar deputy Jan Tuzinsky.

Tuzinsky said that Slovak Radio was broadcasting too much news and that it needed to be transformed into an institution that would produce more cultural and educational programs and help to "strengthen the nation's conscience."

On Friday, Slovak TV broadcasted live from the Parliament session until 6 p.m., but most of the "cleansing" of anti-Meciar officials happened later that night. The next day, the station broadcasted excerpts from the night session and interviews with representatives from all parties in Parliament.

Meciar's allies reacted furiously. The daily SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA, whose editor-in-chief is HZDS deputy Jan Smolec, wrote that "The TV viewer was offered a well-thought-out and perfidious massaging of public opinion. Speakers for the mishmash minority government coalition have received an inordinately large portion of (time on) news broadcasts."

Instead of the Tuesday Pressclub program, Slovak TV broadcast the speech of Parliament Chair Ivan Gasparovic from HZDS. Gasparovic assured the population that all of the dismissals made Friday were democratic and constitutional. "These predetermined steps were taken on behalf of stability and legality. Any other interpretation is misleading and causes destructive moods among the population," said Gasparovic.

Banska Bystricka To Be 3d Seat of Workers Group

AU0812133494 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 5 Dec 94 p 2

[Article by Milan Berta: "For a World of Human Solidarity"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jan Luptak, chairman of the Association of Workers of Slovakia [ZRS] and deputy chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, has been paying an official visit to France since 2 December. Besides holding talks with representatives of the French Party of Labor, on Saturday and Sunday he also participated in its fourth regular congress.

As Jan Luptak told us in a telephone call from Paris yesterday, he addressed the congress not only on behalf of the ZRS but, at the recommendation of the German, Spanish, Hungarian, and other delegations, also as permanent Secretariat member of the International Alliance of Working People [Medzinarodna Dohoda Pracujucich], which assembles workers' parties from 78 countries of the world. [passage omitted]

Representatives of the International Alliance of Working People decided on Saturday that, after Paris and Brussels, Banska Bystrica [where the ZRS is headquartered] would become the third seat of this worldwide organization. Its Secretariat will start working in Banska Bystrica at the beginning of February 1995. It was also confirmed at the meeting in Paris that a worldwide conference of member organizations of the European Association of Working People and of all organizations belonging to the International Alliance of Working People would be held in Banska Bystrica on 11 and 12 March of next year.

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Olechowski Pessimistic About Japanese Investment

LD0812143794 Warsaw Radio Warszawa Network in Polish 1400 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Andrzej Olechowski, who is accompanying President Lech Walesa on his visit to Japan, has said that the Japanese Government has not decided to unfreeze medium- and long-term government credits for the Japanese wanting to invest in Poland. At the same time, Olechowski pointed out that short-term credits to finance Japanese exports to Poland have been available to the Japanese since mid-year.

Earlier, President Walesa expressed the conviction that he had succeeded in persuading the Japanese to invest in Poland.

Sejm Questions Military Information Service Chief

WS0912122694 Warsaw ZYCIE WARSZAWY in Polish 8 Dec 94 p 2

[Article by "LUZ": "How Is Money of Military Special Services Spent?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Colonel Konstanty Malejczyk, chief of the Military Information Services [WSI], explained yesterday at a secret session of the Sejm Defense Committee why next year's budget for these services is so large.

The high expenditures on WSI disconcerted the deputies when they were looking into the budget of the entire National Defense Ministry. The exact sum was not revealed to journalists because the budget of the military special services is secret, as is their entire structure.

We have learned unofficially that the operational fund is to amount to 90 billion zlotys [Z]. Thus, it would be Z10 billion greater than the operational fund of the entire police force. This is what the deputies thought was strange.

Col. Malejczyk explained that the WSI wants to use the Z90 billion to cover all of the costs related to the activity of the services—that is, the administration, equipment, and remuneration for secret collaborators. Meanwhile, the police will earmark all of the Z80 billion for its secret collaborators.

The deputies were interested not only in money. However, the WSI chief gave evasive answers to many of their questions. "You can say more things like that. I enjoy these fairy tales very much...," crooned one of the female deputies, who sneaked out of the room.

"Is any information from the WSI forwarded to Mieczyslaw Wachowski?" The deputies wanted to know how dependent the WSI is on the President's Office head.

"I can assure you that there are no letters that are sent to Minister Wachowski," the WSI chief reportedly answered.

Some of the deputies wanted explanations of the press reports that said that companies set up by the WSI were involved in tobacco and fuel scandals. "We are setting up companies. However, they have nothing to do with fuel or tobacco. There are no unfair practices in our company," Col. Malejczyk reportedly said.

The deputies admitted that even partial verification of these statements would be possible only after setting up a Sejm committee for special services. Today the WSI and the Office of State Protection are in fact beyond the parliament's control

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Spokesman Rejects 'Restrictive' Stance on NATO

AU0912093794 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 0500 GMT 9 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] During a news conference held yesterday, presidential spokesman Ambassador Traian Chebeleu referred to Romania's wish to join NATO, as well as to the Russian Federation's restrictive stance regarding that issue. Chebeleu said that Russia's sensitiveness in security matters, probably stemming from the older or more recent history of that country, is understandable; but he added that Romania too is sensitive in such matters, and therefore strongly wishes to integrate within a security system that would allow it to strengthen its process of democratization and economic reform.

Chebeleu also pointed out that President Ion Iliescu has often reiterated—including at the Budapest CSCE summit conference—that Romania's joining NATO is not directed against anyone; rather, it is intended to create a harmonious framework for our integration into European structures, one of which is NATO, and, therefore, the putting into practice of that wish does not depend on the approval of any foreign power but rather solely on our own ability to meet the requested standards and criteria.

Bucharest Mayor Believes PNL To Join CDR

AU0812134294 Bucharest EXPRES MAGAZIN in Romanian No. 47 29 Nov-6 Dec 94

[Interview with Crin Halaicu, general mayor of Bucharest Municipality and general secretary of the National Liberal Party, by Ileana Lucaciu; place and date not given: "The Crisis Rules"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Lucaciu] At this time, the public is very concerned with the worrisome phenomenon of corruption in Romania. How do you view this phenomenon, and what are its causes?

[Halaicu] Corruption is not a post-revolutionary phenomenon. It existed before, in very complex forms, and continued to manifest itself after the revolution. Corruption means to buy your rights. [passage omitted]

[Lucaciu] The liberal movement is divided today. What, in your opinion, are the causes of this division?

[Halaicu] There is a single cause. Certain leaders of the Liberal Party '93 [PL'93] want to lead this movement at all costs. Radu Campeanu [former leader of the National Liberal Party-PNL] also made the same mistake. He wanted to be the exclusive leader of the liberal movement. He could not conceive of a liberal movement not led by him. Mr. Dinu Patriciu [member of the PL'93 Steering Committee] is now behaving in the same way. Such ambitions negate even the notion of liberalism. The liberal idea presupposes the equal utilization of the potential of various personalities.

[Lucaciu] Do you believe that the PNL will finally be accepted into the Democratic Convention [CDR]?

[Halaicu] I am sure of it. Do you believe that Crin Halaicu would still be backed by the Convention today if the PNL was not going to be admitted into the CDR? All political parties except for the PL'93 voted for me. [passage omitted]

[Lucaciu] A big problem faced by the CDR is putting together joint or separate lists for the elections. What is your opinion on that?

[Halaicu] One must realize that there are two poles in the Convention, with two different messages. Even though a joint list will be put together in the end, there is a need for parallel negotiations, to begin with. On the one hand, you have the National Peasant Christian Democratic Party [PNTCD] people and those with similar views, who should make up their own list; on the other hand, you have the liberal doctrine people, who should make up another list. Then the two lists can be merged if the decision to present a joint list in the elections is made. [passage omitted] [Lucaciu] Two years have passed since the Vacaroiu government took over. How do you assess this period?

[Halaicu] It is like any government in a crisis situation! Mr. Roman [president of the Democratic Party-PD] put it very well: "Crisis rules!" Nevertheless, there have been several important achievements, particularly in the financial field. However, the rulers have not yet managed to unblock the mechanism of privatization. On the contrary, it seems the new law being discussed in the Senate will further complicate matters. I hope I am wrong! [passage omitted]

[Lucaciu] What about inflation, the standard of living, and people's real discontent?

[Halaicu] People would have been dissatisfied with anyone who might have been in power. We are going through a period when discontent cannot be avoided. It is very difficult to rid ourselves of the old mentalities. Only the young people can adjust more easily, provided that they find ways and means to assert themselves. They can renounce preconceived ideas more easily. [passage omitted]

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UN: 55 Detained Canadian Peacekeepers Released

AU0812134994 Paris AFP in English 1337 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, Dec 8 (AFP)—Fifty-five Canadian peacekeepers, held by Bosnian Serbs for the past two weeks, have been released, UN Protection Force spokesman Major Herve Gourmelon said here Thursday.

The Canadian blue helmets were being held at six different locations in retaliation for North Atlantic Treaty Organisation air raids against Serb military targets.

UN Aid Convoy Allowed To Enter Bihac

AU0812160294 Paris AFP in English 1509 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, Dec 8 (AFP)—A UN Protection Force convoy with supplies for Bangladeshi peace-keepers Thursday [8 December] was allowed into the embattled Bosnian Bihac enclave, a UN spokeswoman said here.

Claire Grimes said Croatian Serbs allowed the convoy to cross the border, adding that it had reached the vicinity of Bosanska Bojna Thursday afternoon.

Some 1,200 Bangladeshi blue helmets have been trapped for over a month in the northwestern Bosnian enclave.

The UN said Wednesday it intended to withdraw some of them from Bihac because of the difficulty in resupplying them.

This is only the second convoy to get through to the peace-keepers since a flare up in fighting in the area in late October.

Bangladeshis Receive Aid

AU0912095494 Paris AFP in English 0939 GMT 9 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, Dec 9 (AFP)—A UN convoy transporting food and other material to Bangladeshi peacekeepers arrived in the embattled northwestern Bosnian pocket of Bihac overnight, UN officials said Friday [9 December].

The convoy which had travelled from Zagreb reached the UN Protection Force base at Coralici, in central Bihac, where two surface-to-air missiles fired from Bosnian Serb positions crashed nearby Thursday, UNPROFOR spokesman Herve Gourmelon said.

He said the convoy was to head back to Zagreb with about a third of the 1,200 Bangladeshi soldiers stationed in the pocket. The United Nations said this week that it planned to pull out a third of the peacekeepers because of resupply problems caused by Serb forces besieging Bihac.

Another relief convoy blocked since Thursday in the Serb-held Croatian region of Krajina was awaiting clearance Friday to head to Bihac.

UN special envoy to ex-Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, said in Belgrade Thursday that he had received assurances from the Krajina Serbs that all convoy destined to the embattled enclave would not be held up.

Gourmelon added that fighting in the pocket had eased Friday.

UN Confirms Appointment of Gen Rose Replacement

AU0912113194 Paris AFP in English 1105 GMT 9 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Zagreb, Dec 9 (AFP)—British Major General Rupert Smith will replace his fellow-countryman Lieutenant General Michael Rose as commander of UN forces in Bosnia when Rose's one-year term ends on January 24, an officer at UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) headquarters in Zagreb confirmed Friday [9 December].

An official announcement is expected within the next few days, according to the officer who requested anonymity. THE NEW YORK TIMES reported earlier Friday that Smith would succeed Rose.

Smith, 51, will head a force of 24,000 men and will take over at a time when France and Britain, the two principal contributors to the UN military presence, appear seriously to be contemplating withdrawing their troops. [passage omitted]

He has been assistant chief of the Defense Staff in London since 1992. [passage omitted]

Contact Group Visit Canceled Due to Weather

AU0812141994 Paris AFP in English 1358 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Sarajevo, Dec 8 (AFP)—Bad weather forced representatives of the five-nation Contact Group on Bosnia to call off a planned visit to Sarajevo Thursday, the UN Protection Force said. [passage omitted]

The members of the Contact Group had earlier met the UN special representative in former Yugoslavia Yasushi Akashi at Zagreb airport.

He was due later to fly to Belgrade for discussions with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Borislav Mikelic, one of the leaders of the breakaway self-proclaimed Serb republic of Krajina.

He was expected to raise with Mikelic, the "premier" of the "republic", the question of access for UN convoys to the besieged Moslem enclave of Bihac, which the Serbs are blocking in spite of earlier undertakings, and the involvement of Serb forces from Krajina in the fighting

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in the region. These troops are aiding the Bosnian Serbs and the Moslem forces of the secessionist warlord Fikret Abdic.

Officer: Serbs Provide No Reason for UN Pullout

LD0812174094 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1507 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Zvornik, 8 Dec (TANJUG)—Colonel General Milan Gvero, deputy chief of the General Staff [CGS] of the army of the Srpska republic, today told TANJUG that the Serb side had not provided any pretext for the announced withdrawal of UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] from ex-Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Gen. Gvero noted that "the blue berets" were at their safest precisely on Serb territory. "If somewhere else, beyond the Srpska republic, the decision has been made to withdraw UNPROFOR forces and replace them with some other forces, regardless of any causes or pretexts in our area, then this will take place no matter how we conduct ourselves," Gvero said. "I am sure that nothing in our relationship with UNPROFOR provides a pretext for its withdrawal, but it is also certain that the threat of withdrawal will not entice us into being cooperative to our own detriment and paying for it with our own casualties," Gvero said.

Pointing out the Serb side's hitherto cooperative relations with UNPROFOR, Gen. Gvero said that "UNPROFOR has been safest in the area of the Srpska republic and that not a single soldier or officer has died on Serb territory."

He also said that, at the same time, there have been numerous casualties among "the blue berets" in the territories controlled by Muslims and Croats," and stressed that members of UNPROFOR "would do well if they were truly a peace force and carried out their duty consistently and impartially in keeping with their mission."

Bangladeshis Not To Leave Bihac Without Weapons

LD0812152194 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1332 GMT 8 Dec 94 (Tentative)

[FBIS Translated Text] Bihac, 8 Dec (SRNA)—Lieutenant Colonel General Manojlo Milovanovic, commander of the Srpska republic army at the Bihac-Krupa front, told SRNA that he had no reliable reports about what is happening with members of the UN Bangladeshi battalion that was deployed in the Bihac pocket.

"The Muslim army's 5th Corps has disarmed the Bangladeshi battalion and taken away their logistics equipment, which was at their disposal anyway," Milovanovic pointed out. He recalled that "after arming the Muslim 5th Corps, UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] soldiers from Bangladesh want to leave the area with their small arms only."

"There is a question now: with whom are they leaving 63 armored personnel carriers, some 20 tanks, and heavy weapons?" Milovanovic said.

"I can just tell them that they will not leave Bihac without their weapons. We had a chance to see for ourselves that Bangladeshi soldiers who control only one position in the Serb territory were completely safe and carrying out their mission unhindered," Milovanovic said.

UN Trying To 'Hush Up' Cholera in Serb Areas

AU0912082694 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The outbreak of cholera in the so called republic of Serb Krajina and the self-proclaimed Srpska republic [Serbian entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina] has been taking the proportion of epidemics. The number of cases in the (?Knin) hospital is on the increase. It has been learned from sources close to UNPROFOR in Zagreb that the disease has appeared in (?Banja Luka). In [words indistinct] with the disease at an advanced stage. Under the suspicion that the disease [words indistinct], several people in the [Bosanska] Posavina region and Bijeljina have been [word indistinct]. Three people from that region have been (?isolated) in Belgrade hospitals. Cholera cases have been registered in Herzegovina. [Words indistinct] have been transported to the Podgorica Medical Center.

UN observers are trying to hush up information about this dangerous disease. [word indistinct] (?vaccines) have been sent from Zagreb into regions at risk, albeit only for members of the (?UN) forces. [passage indistinct]

Croat Forces Capture More Territory From Serbs

LD0812200394 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] After HVO [Croatian Defense Council] units captured some important Serb strongholds on the Livno battlefield, they called on the residents of Glamoc, Bosansko Grahovo, and Sipovo to start withdrawing toward Banja Luka in order to avoid unnecessary victims in the upcoming battles. Smiljko Sagolj has a report about the latest events.

[Sagolj] The Srpska republic army tried to consolidate its forces last night in order to regain lost positions on the Livno-Glamoc battlefield, but HVO forces launched a counteroffensive and liberated more positions in, on, and around Mt. Velika Golija and Mala Golija. They have reached positions above Glamoc itself.

We are reporting from Velika Golija, from the position liberated by HVO units. What you can see in the valley below, only a few km away, is Glamoc, a major Serb stronghold. As you can see, Glamoc is right below us. That is Glama, the potato factory, near Glamoc.

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We asked Herceg-Bosna Defense Minister Vlado Soljic, who is touring the soldiers on Velika Golija and Mala Golija—together with Kresimir Zubak, the president of the Presidential Council of the Croat republic of Herceg-Bosna—to comment on Serb claims that all these areas are allegedly being liberated by the Republic of Croatia Army, and not the HVO.

[Begin Soljic recording] I would like to begin with an earlier story: When we liberated Kupres, there were rumors that we were given it. Now they claim that the Croatian Army is liberating these areas. That is their problem, but the truth is that the HVO is liberating the area here. [end recording]

[Sagolj] We asked President Kresimir Zubak to comment on yesterday's offer by Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to begin political negotiations on Bosnia.

[Begin Zubak recording] We are waiting to see whether these are sincere intentions of the Serb political and military leaderships in Bosnia-Herzegovina, or whether this is only a tactical move to buy time in order to consolidate their forces after the defeats they suffered in the Kupres area and Livanjsko Polje. [end recording]

[Sagolj] Serb propaganda claims that the HVO is killing only civilians.

[Begin Soljic recording] It is best seen from this position. We are right above Glamoc. If we wanted to destroy it and kill civilians, we have a good opportunity now, but we do not intend to do that. [end recording]

[Sagolj] HVO units today liberated more positions around the village of Bogdasi, north of Vrbica in the direction of Bosansko Grahovo.

Serbs Condemn HVO, Croatian Army Aggression

LD0812194694 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1825 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Banja Luka, 8 December (TANJUG)—This evening, after its session in Banja Luka, the government of the Srpska republic [RS] issued a statement strongly condemning the latest aggression on the part of the Herceg-Bosna HVO [Croatian Defense Council] and the regular Army of the Republic of Croatia in the Grahovo-Glamoc area.

In this connection the government requested an urgent meeting of the RS supreme command and called for all necessary military measures to be taken to ensure the defense of RS borders, the statement said.

The government authorized all civic services and bodies to step up their care of refugees from the burned down and destroyed Serb villages in the Livno area and in the border areas of the Grahovo and Glamoc municipalities.

The RS government also warned the domestic and international public that this was the continuation of the ethnic cleansing campaign against the Serbs, which Croatia had begun as early as August 1991, which was the cause of the war in former Yugoslavia.

The RS government will send a letter to the government of the republic of Serb Krajina to warn it of all the consequences of the latest offensive carried out by the HVO and the regular Croatian Army, the statement reads.

The RS government said at the end of the statement that the Gacko thermoelectric plant and the Incel power plant in Banja Luka would be reactivated in an effort to improve the energy situation in the republic.

Serbs Intensify Movement, Regroup Near Brcko

AU0912105394 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1000 GMT 9 Dec 94

[Report by Hamid Deronjic and Nihad Salihodzic from Brcko]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night the Serbian aggressor intensified his attacks on the Brcko front. In addition to the usual provocative small arms fire, which was considerably intensified last night, the aggressor fired antiaircraft guns and machine guns and portable rocket launchers at Djukici and [word indistinct].

The central part of the Brcko defense was targeted by mortars and portable rocket launchers, while the aggressor from the direction of [word indistinct] fired 60-mm mortars at our positions in Vranovaca.

The last 12 hours on the Brcko front have seen intensified movement and the regrouping of enemy military hardware, as well as increased activities by the aggressor's sabotage-reconnaissance groups.

The defense lines of the free Brcko territory, the very high morale [word indistinct] are under control.

Army Denies Fall of Velika Kladusa to Abdic

AU0912105494 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1000 GMT 9 Dec 94

[Report by Nada al-Isa from Zagreb]

[FBIS Translated Text] Large forces of the aggressor's army are concentrating around Velika Kladusa from the so-called republic of Serb Krajina, most of the troops from the so called Banija Corps, and military units from so called Yugoslavia. The town is being pounded by long-range artillery from the direction of Pljesivica and Licko Petrovo Selo, from where the aggressor's tanks and long-range artillery are crossing even as we speak.

With the aid of heavy artillery and the aggressor's military and paramilitary, the remnants of Fikret Abdic's paramilitaries are trying to enter Velika Kladusa itself. However, the defense lines of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army 5th Corps are firm and safe. Therefore, there is no truth in the reports that the UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR] has been distributing

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for days now and for reasons known only to itself about the remnants of Fikret Abdic's paramilitaries and other aggressor forces breaking through the Velika Kladusa defense lines in certain places. To repeat, the defense lines are completely firm.

Bihac is coming under fierce attacks both by infantry and long-range artillery from the direction of Izacic. Heavy infantry clashes are also under way around Bosanska Krupa and the Grmusko-Srbljanski plateau. The aggressor has today used chemical agents on both Bosanska Krupa and the Grmusko-Srbljanski plateau—including Grabez.

Last night three Volkhov missiles were fired from the direction of Bosanska Otoka on positions near the Bangladeshi UNPROFOR battalion. The 5th Corps stresses that the missiles were fired from the region of Busevic near Bosanska Otoka, which was recently attacked by NATO aircraft. It now appears, however, that NATO aircraft did not attack the aggressor's military positions but rather something else, models most likely. One of the missiles did not explode so the international community now has firm evidence of the shelling of the Bihac region.

Bihac is demanding urgent action by the Security Council, since not only shells but also chemical agents are being directed at the area. The long-suffering people of Bihac are wondering how many more people must be wounded and how many more killed for the world to start protecting its declared protected zone.

To conclude, let me repeat: At the moment Kladusa and Bihac are being fiercely pounded. Large forces are massing. However, the defense lines of the 5th Corps are firm and unchanged.

'Fiercest Battles' Reported in Bosanska Krupa

AU0812162894 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Report by Muhamed Mulic from Bihac]

[FBIS Translated Text] For the time being, the fiercest battles are being waged with the joint aggressor's units on the free parts of Bosanska Krupa where the entire valley has turned into a huge smoke curtain from the ferocity of the shelling and infantry battles. On some sections of the battlefield, hand-to-hand combat is being waged and the enemy is destroying and torching everything before him. Fleeing from the chetnik attacks and battles, more than 3,500 citizens of the free part of Bosanska Krupa are moving deeper into the district. Fierce battles are still being waged in the Velika Kladusa region, while the Bihac protected zone is today again from time to time targeted by the enemy's artillery that caused new material damage and injured a large number of civilians. It has been noticed however, that UNPROFOR's [UN Protection Force] reports do not mention attacks from UNPA [UN Protected Area] zones in Croatia, although the most attacks are in fact coming from the region of the so-called Serbian Krajina.

According to information received, a UNHCR-organized convoy with food should come from Zagreb today. It includes 100 metric tons of different goods. Another convoy organized by humanitarian organizations with 90 metric tons of medicines, clothes, and food for the Bihac Hospital has been waiting in Moscenica for six days to be permitted to pass through UNPA zones in Croatia.

At the regular meeting of international organizations held in the District Assembly building in Bihac, an UNPROFOR spokesman denied the reports that the Bangladeshi battalion is withdrawing. Due to shortage of food and technical equipment, 400 soldiers will temporarily be transferred to Zagreb until a more normal situation with their supplies is established.

Minister Views Natural Gas, Electricity Supplies

AU0812210694 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Report Azra Sipovic-Tubinkovic]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] There has been both more warmth and light in our capital city lately. Electricity is being distributed more equally and natural gas is reaching stoves more or less regularly. Only the problem with oil shortage has remained. Here is Faruk Smailbegovic, minister of energy and industry in the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina, telling about how certain the supplies of natural gas and other fuels in our country, that is, its capital city are now.

[Begin Smailbegovic recording] One problem is the delivery to Bosnia-Herzegovina of the quantities [of natural gas] agreed with the Russian Federation, and that is 80,000 cubic meters per hour. That is, at the entrance into Zvornik. This is according to the protocol signed by the director of Sarajevo-Gas and the director of Energopetrol in Moscow on 25 November. The other problem is the [word indistinct] of the valves connected with the arrival of the gas into the city of Sarajevo itself. If the agreement, that is, the protocol signed in Moscow, on ensuring 80,000 cubic meters of gas per hour for Bosnia-Herzegovina is not complied with and the valves are not opened, we shall have to take appropriate measures for any gas deliveries from Hungary to Serbia and Vojvodina to be stopped until this is settled. [end recording]

Speaking about the production of electricity in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Minister Smailbegovic said the following:

[Begin Smailbegovic recording] We have to increase the production of electricity. Today, this production on the territory of, I repeat, on the territory under the control of the army and not the territory of the Federation, is 150 megawatts. Hydroelectric power plants are idle as there is no accumulation. Most of the thermoelectric power plants are broken down. [end recording]

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According to Minister Smailbegovic, not a single liter of oil has been received in the city through the UNHCR. [passage omitted]

Milosevic Said Playing 'Double Game' With Serbs

BR0912082794 Paris LE MONDE in French 6 Dec 94 p 3

[Article by Florence Hartmann: "Dubious Game"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Slobodan Milosevic has returned his verdict: "I am not capable of making decisions on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs." This reply, given in Belgrade on Sunday [4 December] to the French and British foreign ministers, was more than predictable. The president of Serbia, first stigmatized by the international community for having orchestrated the war in Croatia and Bosnia, was then transformed into a man of peace for having lent his support to an international peace plan that the Bosnian Serbs rejected. Subsequently he became the last resort of an international community short of solutions for putting an end to the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, mainly in Bosnia.

Although it is officially denied by his former Bosnian allies who aspire only to international recognition of their puppet state, the strong man of Serbia still has various means of exerting pressure. On the one hand, if various sources in Belgrade are to be believed, Slobodan Milosevic has infiltrated the army and maybe even the Bosnian Serb leadership. On the other hand, Radovan Karadzic does not have an economy capable of fueling the war which is mobilizing his entire military capabilities over more than 1,400 km of hotly contested fronts.

Slobodan Milosevic will devote his time to assessing what compensation he could derive from the various forms of pressure he is being asked to impose. For the time being the Serbian president has not named his price to the major powers gathered together in the Contact Group, who are giving the Bosnian Serbs the right to form a confederation with Serbia. Nevertheless he has made the gesture that the West expected of him, which would have involved recognizing the international borders of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Serbian president has everything to gain by securing the signature of his brethren in Bosnia to a peace plan which, broadly speaking, sanctions the victory of the policy pursued by Belgrade for more than four years and would enable him to liberate himself from the weight of the international sanctions which are weighing down on his country. However, it is clear that he is also trying to gain time in order to enable the Bosnian Serbs to obtain the changes they are demanding on the maps carving up the territory of Bosnia. "The possibility of changing the borders on the basis of bilateral negotiations will also be a suitable argument for having the peace plan accepted," he said on Sunday.

Although Slobodan Milosevic does not approve the suicidal attitude of the Bosnian Serbs which is threatening to ruin all his efforts with a view to regain a favorable image for Serbia in the international arena, he is nonetheless managing the hard-line attitude of the leaders in Pale and the disarray of the international community supremely well. If secret UN reports quoted by ASSOCIATED PRESS and articles in the Serbian press are to be believed, the double game by the Serbian president supposedly also involves aiding the Bosnian Serbs in their offensive against the Muslim enclave of Bihac. Indeed, one Serbian weekly claims that 1,000 armed men belonging to the special forces of the Serbian police have supposedly returned to Bosnia to take part in the fighting. Meanwhile the U.S. State Department recently announced that the embargo imposed by Belgrade on the Bosnian Serbs in August was "proving somewhat leaky." Moreover, Friday's abortive UN Security Council resolution which aimed to reaffirm the embargo between Serbia and the Serbian territory in Bosnia, confirmed de facto that it was not being respected.

The only obstacle that Slobodan Milosevic could run up against in his scheme to obtain the greatest possible concessions from the West in exchange for the signature of the peace plan, could yet come from the Bosnian Serbs who, giddy from their victories and the international community's abdication of its responsibilities, may be tempted to continue disregarding the advice from Belgrade for a long time to come.

HDZ President Kordic on Talks With SDA

AU0912113394 Ljubljana OSLOBODJENJE (European Edition) in Serbo-Croatian 1 Dec 94 p 6

[Interview with Dario Kordic, president of the HDZ of Bosnia-Herzegovina, by Senka Kurtovic; place and date not given: "Fair Organization for Croats and Bosniaks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dario Kordic, president of the HDZ of Bosnia-Herzegovina, is one of the initiators of the talks between the HDZ and the SDA [Party of Democratic Action]. In Kordic's opinion it was thanks to this initiative that many misunderstandings between the Bosniak-Muslim and the Croat people have been cleared up.

[Kurtovic] What is your assessment of these talks?

[Kordic] Their main aim was to clear up all the misunderstandings and identify the open issues in implementing the Washington Agreements. With the Agreements the basis for everything that was happening there was created—the Zagreb Agreements were also signed, which, I would say, only operationalized what had already been agreed by the leaderships of the two parties. However, we have not carried out many of the tasks yet.

[Kurtovic] What are the main reasons for your dissatisfaction?

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[Kordic] We are unsatisfied primarily with the representation of the Croats in all the federal ministries and various Federation institutions. We are also late in forming the transitory authorities in certain municipalities, and also the cantonal ones, which, in my opinion, is the basis for resolving the key issues—forming the new municipalities, that is, changing the municipal borders. I, as a person who is well aware of the essence of the overall Croat-Bosniak relations, firmly believe that we cannot bring those relations to the level at which all the misunderstandings will be permanently resolved before we establish a fair organization for both peoples at the level of local self-managements.

Two Peoples in Two Compact Territories

[Kurtovic] With the organization of local self-managements many other problems stemming from this would also be resolved. What exactly are they?

[Kordic] It is evident that various political consequences as well as the war, tragic for both peoples, have left wounds that must be overcome in a prudent way. The solution to this is precisely the local self-managements. This means giving the real right both to the Croat and the Bosniak people to carry out local self-management on a compact territory. This is also a precondition for the refugees to return. People will not easily decide to return unless they know what they will get by returning. We are therefore asking that the real rights of the Croat people be exercised. However, I would be unfair and hypocritical if I did not say that it is just as logical to demand the same right for the Bosniak people. These rights are the strategic interest of both peoples to overcome all the misunderstandings and, through the Washington Agreements and the consistent implementation of the Federation Constitution, join the Western European civilization.

[Kurtovic] What was the atmosphere in which the Assembly session was held? The agenda was being drawn up for nearly five hours.

[Kordic] If we know the essence of democracy and parliamentarianism, then it is logical that we must prepare well for a session. Taking into account the conditions we are in, this Assembly session was held in the atmosphere of tolerance. Democracy was expressed. As far as the drawing up of the agenda is concerned, we were trying to put the items on it that would protect the vital interests of both peoples.

[Kurtovic] Someone said at the speaker's stand that the peoples are much more united than their political, that is, party leaders. What is your opinion of that?

[Kordic] I cannot completely agree with this statement. We should not escape the truth and speak about brotherhood and unity, something that has passed and that has obviously led to these events. If we know that, then we may say that both peoples trust their legitimate and legally elected representatives, the parties that represent the will of their people. These political leaderships bear the responsibility and have the right to talk and reach agreements. I think that the levels and possibilities of agreement are close to the positions of both peoples. This is why we should neither present the situation as idyllic nor take a gloomy view of everything. Significant progress is evident compared with what was happening eight or nine months ago.

[Kurtovic] Does that mean that the situation on the ground has significantly improved?

[Kordic] Information shows there are points that the Croat people cannot be satisfied with. I am thinking primarily of the negative trend of the Croat people moving out, which would seem absurd even to an outsider. Some 20 days ago about 28,000 Croats left the territory of the Federation, primarily from Zenica, Konjic, and Kakanj; some from Bugojno and Travnik, where fewer Croats remained after the conflict with the Bosniaks; and some from Tuzla and Sarajevo. This is a loss, not only for the Croat people, but also for the Bosniaks—if they remain alone on this territory, they will lose a component that gave a certain color to these areas.

[Kurtovic] What are the reasons for this mass exodus?

[Kordic] The war is still on. There have been mobilizations by force, but now there are much fewer. The rights of the Croat people have not been regulated, and I personally supported that a Croat in Sarajevo have the right to be in the HVO formations as the legitimate component of the Federation armed forces. The Croats are not escaping the defense of the homeland, but they would like to do it within the HVO. I thought this should first be resolved in Sarajevo, and then in the other areas, but I also thought that the Bosniaks should also be able to exercise that right at the territory controlled by the HVO. Many young Croat men left Sarajevo because there were Bosniaks at important positions who supported that. In Bugojno, Vares, and Konjic the agreements between the HDZ and the SDA have been rejected. The situation in Usora, where the Croat people are being denied the right to implement local self-management, has made me particularly sad. Some people I would call local sheriffs have arrested the representatives of the Croat people, the editor of the local radio station, and even the commander of one of the best battalions. In Podbrijezdje at Zenica, where Croats are dominant, a mujahidin formation refuses to move, despite our requests.

About the Mujahidin and Stolac

[Kurtovic] You said "a mujahidin formation." Is that the official title of the formation?

[Kordic] I am not sure what the official title is—'El Mujahid' or something like that. It does have that orientation, and makes no secret of it.

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[Kurtovic] What is the relation toward the Bosniaks at the territories under HVO control?

[Kordic] I would like to point out Posavina as a good example, but there are also over 7,000 Bosniaks who have returned to their homes at the HVO-controlled territories, and to the Croat republic of Herceg-Bosna. You can go and check this in Livno, Tomislavgrad, Mostar, Orasje.

[Kurtovic] Does that mean that the Bosniaks will soon be able to go to Stolac too?

[Kordic] I have not supported partial solutions in answering the previous questions either. My approach is that it is the right of each person to return to their home, on the 'all for all' principle. According to the information we have, before the Washington Agreements nearly 130,000 Croats were expelled from their homes or left them, and not because they were enjoying themselves. Moreover, the Bosniaks did not leave the territories that were or still are under the control of the HVO in the Croat republic of Herceg-Bosna because they were extremely happy. According to our statistics, between 55 and 60 thousand Bosniaks left their homes.

[Kurtovic] What about Mostar? What is the current situation in the town?

[Kordic] Mostar is specific, because it is under the control of the European Union, and the HDZ views this as part of the implementation of the overall Washington Agreements, as being in the spirit of building the Federation. There has been visible progress in this town, and, when we compare the situation to what it used to be, we can be satisfied. We are not too happy, but a process has been started that is in the interest of both peoples. It is important that the relations are created that will guarantee that there will never be conflicts in these areas again, that such an organization of authorities is achieved that Mostar be a town association of municipalities, which is what we support.

Who Does Mostar Belong To?

[Kurtovic] Does that mean that dividing and undue claiming of Mostar has stopped? What is your interpretation of whom Mostar belongs to now?

[Kordic] Mostar is a town association of municipalities. We support the establishment of more municipalities in town, which will be within the framework of the town. The European Union also clearly stated, when the agreement was being signed, that it did not want to prejudice the final political solution in the town organization.

[Kurtovic] Would you comment on the joint military success of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the HVO?

[Kordic] The atmosphere of the joint victory of the HVO and the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina is what marked the Assembly session. These victories created the precondition for the overall political process—not only of the building of the Federation, but also of the overall solution for Bosnia-Herzegovina—to impose on the Contact Group the task of making additional pressure on Karadzic's Serbs in this atmosphere, of the necessity of a political solution, of peace. The joint Headquarters has performed its function before. I said that there were two legitimate components—two armies, the HVO and the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Their coordination and mutual help have shown that the Croat people and the HVO troops also have wishes, interests, and dignity. This showed that the Croat people would also not renounce their centuries-old homes—primarily in Posavina, Jajce, Komusina, and many other areas.

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Tudjman, Galbraith Discuss Bosnia Confederation

LD0812183094 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Franjo Tudjman, president of the Republic of Croatia, this evening received Peter Galbraith, U.S. ambassador to Croatia, the president's office reported. Talks focused on the implementation of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and its confederation with the Republic of Croatia; the meeting between presidents Clinton and Tudjman; the CSCE meeting in Budapest; and UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force]. The meeting was attended by Miomir Zuzul, Croatian ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva and the president's special envoy, and Ivic Pasalic, the president's domestic policy adviser.

Poll Shows Majority Oppose Serbian Autonomy

AU0612083394

[FBIS Editorial Report] Zagreb GLOBUS in Serbo-Croatian on 25 November on pages 16 and 17 carries an approximately 2,000-word report by Prof. Dr. Slaven Letica entitled "58 Percent of the Croatian Public Support Neither Franjo Tudjman Nor Drazen Budisa," which presents the results of an opinion poll on the preferences regarding politicians and political parties, the quality of life, when occupied territories will be liberated, the negotiations with "the so called local Serbian authorities," and rights to be granted to the Serbian people in the occupied territories. The opinion poll was conducted on 15 and 16 November and "involves 2,000 respondents selected on the basis of the random sampling method."

The results of the poll are presented below. Responses are expressed in percentages:

Politicians	17 Oct Poll	21 Nov Poll
Franjo Tudjman	37.2	40.5
Drazen Budisa	22.3	20.6
Ante Djapic	4.8	5.6
Stipe Mesic	6.7	5.1
Zdravko Tomac	2.8	4.8
Savka Dabcevic-Kucar	4.6	4.1
Zvonimir Separovic	0.0	3.8
Stjepan Pankretic	2.8	3.2
Vlado Gotovac	2.8	2.9
Silvije Degen	2.3	2.5
Others	2.0	2.0
Dobroslav Paraga	2.1	1.8
Janko Bobetko	0.0	1.7
Miko Tripalo	0.0	1.4
Nikica Valentic	4.2	0.0
Zlatko Kramaric	3.6	0.0//
Ivica Racan	1.8	0.0

The report states that in the poll on presidential candidates, "the number and percentage of people who responded with 'do not know,' 'will not vote,' or 'do not want to answer' has increased to 35 percent" and that "the data presented does not include those indecisive people or 'people without candidates.'"

Parties	17 Oct Poll	21 Nov Poll
Croatian Democratic Community	32.5	33.7
Croatian Social Liberal Party	28.9	26.3
Croatian Party of Rights	9.2	8.3
Croatian Peasants Party	6.2	7.4
Croatian New Democrats	6.5	5.1
Social Democratic Party	4.4	4.6
Istrian Democratic Congress	5.0	4.4
Croatian People's Party	4.0	4.3
Others	2.2	2.5
HKDU [expansion unknown]	0.0	2.2
Dalmatian Action	1.1	1.2

In answer to the question, are you living better, worse, or the same as before the war, the responses were: considerably worse, 22.2; worse, 45.9; the same, 20.8; better, 9.3; considerably better, 1.8. In answer to the question, when do you think the occupied Croatian territories will be liberated, the responses were (in percentages): this year, 2.9; 1995, 24.2; 1996, 13.1; 1997, 8.8; 2000, 21.0; after 2000, 8.1; Never, 20.0; do not know, 1.9. In answer to the question, do you approve of the negotiations of the Croatian Government with representatives of the so-called local Serb authorities, the responses (in percentages) were: yes, without any conditions, 9.4; yes, on condition that they recognize the Croatian state, 42.8; yes, on condition that they permit Croatian police representatives on occupied territories, 18.6; no, 28.4; do not know, 0.8. In answer to the question, what rights should the Republic of Croatia guarantee to the Serbian population on the currently occupied territories, the responses were:

	No	Acceptable	Do not know
Self-determination, secession	86.6	2.0	11.4
Own home guard	83.4	3.0	13.6
Own police force	82.7	4.8	12.5

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Confederal ties with FRY	82.0	3.8	14.2
Separate passport	81.9	5.3	12.8
Own flag	77.6	8.8	13.6
Political autonomy	72.9	11.8	15.3
Separate taxation, budget	71.1	10.0	18.9
Separate school system	64.4	19.3	16.3
Official use of Cyrillic alphabet	60.1	25.6	14.3
Pensions	35.8	44.6	19.6

RSK's Mikelic Wants Economic Talks Continued

AU0812210594 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Statement by Borislav Mikelic, republic of Serb Krajina prime minister, after talks with UN special Envoy Akashi and Serbian President Milosevic; in Belgrade on 8 December—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Regarding the economic agreement, the activities cannot concentrate solely on the highway, where Croatia's priority interest lies—but parallel also on water lines, electricity, and naturally, the oil pipeline, where we have interests. We must continue the talks on economic issues in other spheres rather than say, we are moving onto political issues now. Therefore, as regards today's talks, I believe that we explained things well. We demanded an urgent meeting of the central commission that had worked on the cease-fire plan. This should take place by the beginning of next week, and if everything is more or less resolved between the UN Protection Force and Croatia by the coming week—there are definitely problems on our side, too, however, they are minor in comparison to what Croatia is doing with its troops—then we can expect that a more peaceful option will prevail on this territory, that people will return to work, that we will concentrate on economic issues, and that this will definitely be well-received and welcomed in Europe.

RSK's Babic Puts Opening of Highway in Doubt

AU0812220794 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 8 Dec 94 p 3

[D.M.-initialed report: "Opening of Highway in Doubt"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Knin—If the Croatian Army does not withdraw from Mt. Dinara and from the Serbian foothill of Dinara, and thus stop encircling Knin by the regular Croatian Army troops and the Croatian Defense Council [HVO], the implementation of an agreement signed between the republic of Serbian Krajina [RSK] and Croatia will not be feasible and the opening of the Okucani-Lipovac highway will definitely not be possible. This was stated by RSK Foreign Minister Milan Babic in light of the latest aggression by the Croatian Army and the HVO on the RSK territory in Grahovo municipality, which has been going on for several days and during which several Serbian villages have already burned down.

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Gligorov Reaffirms Stand on Greek Embargo, Name

AU0812160694 Skopje MIC in English 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] is prepared to continue the dialogue with Greece, but not under the conditions of an unjust embargo, nor the condition of changing the name. The stand of the Republic of Macedonia was expressed by President Gligorov, who met with the German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel in Budapest yesterday, during the CSCE summit.

At this, according to the Macedonian delegation, important discussion, beside the question regarding the continuation of the Macedonia-Greek talks, also the possibility of speeding up the process of political and economic negotiations of Macedonia for entering the European Union [EU], was reviewed.

Otherwise, as part of the initiative for settling the Greek-Macedonia dispute, Minister Kinkel also had a meeting with the Greek Minister Karolos Papoulias. As it is found out, such a meeting with much more specific contents will be held this week in Essen, at the motion of the minister of the EU at which Kinkel will also be joined by his French colleague Alain Juppe.

It was also confirmed in Budapest that President Clinton's special envoy Matthew Nimetz will arrive in Macedonia around 15 December, after, probably, visiting Athens.

As part of other bilateral meetings, President Gligorov also realized contacts with representatives of the Vatican, with the Czech President Vaclav Havel, who was invited to visit Macedonia and with whom the advancement of the mutual cooperation was discussed, with the Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Karlsson, the Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev, the Albanian President Sali Berisha, and the Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Horn.

In the talks with the president of Bulgaria, the Macedonian side expressed readiness to improve the mutual cooperation, as well as the Macedonia stand regarding the use of the language and the signing of the document with Bulgaria. Concrete steps for a joint appearance and an advancement of the mutual cooperation was agreed with all the conversationalists.

Criminal Information Pact Signed With Russians

AU0812175394 Skopje MIC in English 7 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Moscow yesterday, an agreement for cooperation was signed between the Interior Ministry of the Republic of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] and the Interior Ministry of the Russian Federation. The agreement was signed by Minister Ljubomir Frckovski, on behalf of Macedonia, and the acting Russian Interior Minister Mikhail Yegorov.

Yegorov stated that the two ministries should cooperate with the purpose of upholding order. Now, in both countries, efforts should be made to realize the signed documents. With that in mind, meetings of experts from both ministries will be organized while information is already being exchanged. "I believe," said Yegorov, "that Macedonia is located in such a place, where the Balkan drug path is, as well as the arms, and we know that here with us, very well."

Minister Frckovski stated that the cooperation is very important, not only because of the strategic and geopolitical questions, but also because of very specific connections and actions and types of criminal activities, whose roots can extend all the way up to the Russian Federation. Frckovski also emphasized that they agreed to undertake a couple of actions together with the Russian colleagues, which will bring closer cooperation and the exchange of information. That will also mean a continuation and strengthening of the cooperation with new foundations, between the two interior ministries.

Purchase of Russian Helicopters Discussed

95BA0022B Skopje SVET in Macedonian 15 Oct 94 p 17

[Article by Vladimir T. Dimitrovski: "Helicopters for Humanitarian Purposes"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Macedonian [he Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] Army has acquired its own flying machines. That applies to helicopters produced in Russia of the MI-17 model that, according to the NATO code, are known as "clocks." Their function is primarily humanitarian, we were told in a recent meeting with Colonel Mile Manolev, commander of the Air Force and Antiaircraft Defense of the ARM [Army of the Republic of Macedonia]. They are not included in the embargo on the sale of weapons to former Yugoslavia.

The MI-17 helicopter was designed by the Mikhail L. Mil Design Bureau in 1982. It is a very successful Russian export product. It is a twin-engine 2,200 horsepower helicopter; unloaded, it weighs 7,260 kg, and its fuel capacity is 2,000 liters. It has a five-propeller rotor and a maximal speed of 250 kilometers per hour. It can reach a maximal height of 5,000 meters and can cover a distance of 495 km. It is manned by a three-member crew and can carry 24 people. Its crane can lift a weight of 150 kg, and it can lower or raise manpower or a load to a height of 65 meters. Bearing in mind the humanitarian aspect of the MI-17 helicopter, it is no accident that it has been equipped for such purposes. In the ARM, it will be part of the search and rescue service, which is in accordance with the stipulations of the International Organization for Air Flights (ICAO). Equipment for search, rescue, first aid, and radio and technical facilities and navigation equipment has been procured. Thus, these helicopters will constitute a significant factor in fighting natural disasters, particularly forest fires, which

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over the past two years have caused great damage to Macedonia. The MI-17 helicopter also has a water dropping facility known as "Baby Bucket," which can contain 1.5 metric tons of water and can be filled within 20 seconds and released in half that time. Another significant feature is that in loading this system the depth of the water source does not have to exceed 1.5 meters as the helicopter flies over the water surface.

Taking into consideration that helicopters are among the most efficient transportation facilities, in war they assume the task of direct fire support of land-force units. That is why it is no accident that they are increasingly used by all modern armies. The air forces use helicopters for tactical reconnaissance, observation, fire support, manpower transportation, and communications. It is a fact that in the case of our Army this is of no significance, for it is bound to honor the weapons embargo, while its Air Force is used for humanitarian purposes.

[Box, p 17]

Helicopters and Our Neighbors

Albania: The Albanian Armed Forces have no combat helicopters but 28 transport helicopters of the MI-4 model.

Bulgaria: The Bulgarian Air Force has 44 MI-24 combat helicopters, 25 MI-17, and 14 MI-2 helicopters for transportation purposes; all in all, Bulgaria has 83 helicopters.

Greece: Our southern neighbor has a total of 186 helicopters, 151 of which in the KoV [expansion unknown] (of them about half, 85, are of the UH-1D and AB-205 models, all U.S.-made). Greece's Air Force has 22 and its Navy 13 helicopters.

Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia: Our northern neighbor's Air Force has 145 helicopters, 99 of which are of the "Gazela" model. Thirty-five transport helicopters are of the MI-8 model and the others are MI-14, KA-45, and KA-27.

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Federal

Akashi in Belgrade for Talks With Leaders

Free Passage for Convoys

LD0812194594 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1831 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 8 Dec (TANJUG)—Yasushi Akashi, the special envoy of the UN secretary general, said this evening he agreed with Serb Krajina leaders on a free passage across Serb Krajina-controlled territory for Bihac-bound UN and UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] convoys. Akashi made this statement for journalists after two hours of talks in Belgrade with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, republic of Serb Krajina president Milan Martic, the republic's prime minister, Borislav Mikelic, and Yugoslav Foreign Minister Vladislav Jovanovic. The talks were also attended by UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] Commander Bertrand de Lapresle.

Akashi also expressed hope that the Belgrade-Zagreb highway would be reopened to traffic in the course of next week.

Milosevic Comments

LD0812200294 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1840 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 8 Dec (TANJUG)—President of Serbia Slobodan Milosevic today received Yasushi Akashi, the UN secretary general's special envoy and head of the mission for the former Yugoslavia, UNPROFOR Commander General Bertrand Delapresle, with their aides, Milan Martic, president of the republic of Serb Krajina, and the republic's prime minister, Borislav Mikelic, the president's office reports.

President Milosevic expressed satisfaction with the positive development of relations and cooperation between the UN mission and the Krajina authorities. It is beyond doubt, President Milosevic stressed, that all factors in this area should help and support the UN mission's work as the mission is expected to carry out its mandate by maintaining an unbiased and objective approach to all sides in the crisis.

The Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are committed to the peace process and the affirmation of the UN role in this process. Hence, for their part, they strive to help and support the efforts and energy invested by the mission in securing peace and carrying out its numerous and complex humanitarian tasks.

It was stated that the presence of the peace force in the war-stricken areas is undoubtedly a factor reducing the threat of war escalation.

In the course of the talks, Martic and Akashi reached a number of specific agreements on continuing and expanding cooperation between UNPROFOR and the Krajina authorities.

They also discussed the UN mission's important role in reaching a comprehensive agreement on the cessation of hostilities in the area of ex-Bosnia-Herzegovina as an important precondition for creating an impetus for the peace process and paving a successful path to a final peace.

President Milosevic stressed that the UN mission and Yasushi Akashi personally enjoy support from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the course of its mission. He also stressed that the role and task of the UN mission rules out military threats and resorting to military means on the part of the international community in line with its declared efforts to solve the crisis in a peaceful way.

The talks were also attended by Yugoslav Foreign Minister Vladislav Jovanovic, the statement notes.

Martic Optimistic

AU0812200394 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Statement by Milan Martic, Serbian Krajina republic president, after talks with UN envoy Yasushi Akashi and Serbian President Milosevic; in Belgrade on 8 December—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today's meeting with Messrs. Akashi and de Lapresle was, I would say, a step forward in the promotion of relations between the Republic of Serbian Krajina [RSK] and UNPROFOR, which is very good. We discussed the Bihac pocket where we repeated that our forces were not present on that territory, that this was an inter-Muslim conflict, and that this was a conflict of the Serbian Republic with the 5th Corps.

As regards the economic agreement signed with Croatia, we have conveyed to Mr. Akashi today that we truly favor peaceful resolution of everything and that we wish this agreement to be implemented. However, we also conveyed that we cannot realize it until the first phase, which is cease-fire, that is, a cease-fire agreement signed in Zagreb on 29 March, has been honored.

It is widely known that Croatia concentrated troops toward the RSK and that it has regular troops in the Serbian Republic. They are attacking Serbian villages, they have burnt down nine Serbian villages in the vicinity of Glamoc and Grahovo, and in such circumstances it is almost impossible to enter into the second phase. Thus, the issue of highways, water, and the oil pipeline cannot be resolved until the first phase is accomplished.

We have Mr. Akashi's promise that this will be resolved very quickly, which would be very good for us. Our side promised to carry out demobilization of our army and send people back to work in such a case. This would definitely contribute to the peace process. However, it is not up to us whether this will happen, this depends more on the Croatian side and on the political pressure by

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Messrs Akashi, Butrus-Ghali, and others who are taking part in it. However, I nevertheless believe that this will happen.

Akashi Comments

AU0812210294 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Statement by UN Special Envoy Yasushi Akashi, after talks with Serbian President Milosevic, Krajina president Martic, and Krajina prime minister Mikelic; in Belgrade on 8 December; in English with superimposed Serbo-Croatian translation—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified reporter] Mr. Akashi, how do you assess today's talks with the president?

[Akashi] I am glad that I had the opportunity of meeting with President Milosevic, and Mr. Martic and Mr. Mikelic from Knin. I am pleased to announce that I have managed to agree with Mr. Martic and Mr. Mikelic on a free passage for convoys, UNPROFOR, and the UNHCR through the territories controlled by the Knin authorities.

Our Bangladeshi battalion in Bihac can now be better supplied and I hope that we can contribute significantly to the alleviation of the suffering of innocent people in Bihac in this way.

We also discussed the issue of implementation of the 29 March cease-fire agreement. I was able to get a clear and firm commitment from Mr. Martic and Mr. Mikelic as to their desire for faithful implementation of this agreement. They stated that they have no intention of meddling into the Bihac conflict and that was helpful.

With President Milosevic I discussed more general issues and prospects for peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We were able to identify wide areas where we are in agreement, as well as guidelines for the future.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] opening the Belgrade-Zagreb highway?

[Akashi] Yes, I am a great optimist about opening the highway. It could be implemented very quickly in Croatia, perhaps in the course of the next week.

Jovanovic Comments

AU0812200894 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 8 Dec 94

[Statement by FRY Foreign Minister Vladislav Jovanovic, after talks with UN special envoy Akashi, Serbian President Milosevic, and Krajina president Martic, in Belgrade on 8 December—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] First of all, we can conclude that today's talks were useful, thorough, and successful. We believe that this will contribute to the strengthening of the peace process in this part of the former Yugoslavia and strengthening of the process of understanding on a larger scale.

Serbia

Pankov: Aid to RSK, Bosnian Serbs Mainly Food

AU0812213694 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 8 Dec 94

["Excerpt" from an interview with Radovan Pankov, Serbian minister for liaison with Serbs outside Serbia, with an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given;—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Regarding the humanitarian aid that has been sent to the Serbian people in the Serbian Republic and the Republic of Serbian Krajina [RSK] over the past three months, I can responsibly say that Serbia has clean hands here. Namely, over the last three months we have sent approximately 14,500 metric tons of humanitarian aid to the Serbian Republic altogether, while in the RSK we have sent approximately 12,500 metric tons. Therefore, 27 million kg of humanitarian aid have reached the two Serbian republics.

What is important and essential is that we have an agreement with the Serbian Republic and the RSK about the so-called collection centers where this aid is being sent. Further distribution and delivery is the responsibility of the incumbent offices in these two Serbian republics.

The majority of the aid is food. The majority. I would even say that 90 percent of it is food. The rest is medications, clothing, and what is important and essential, textbooks for pupils in primary and secondary education. A great number of books go to students in the RSK, namely, as you probably know, Nikola Tesla University has some 2,000 students.

SDA Official Says Party Dispute Unresolved

LD0812154794 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1322 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 8 Dec (TANJUG)—Rasim Ljajic, secretary general of the Party of Democratic Action [SDA], said today that "the dispute within

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the party has not been resolved" and that he "no longer communicates with Sulejman Ugljanin, the chairman of the party."

At a news conference in Belgrade Ljajic explained that this is a matter of two clashing political concepts, one of which is guided by political reality while the other is guided by political desires.

He stresses that Ugljanin's view that Sandzak should join Bosnia "is most damaging for Bosnia itself," whereas he advocates the unchangeability of borders in the area of the former Yugoslavia.

"We are going to resolve our status within the framework of the state we live in and we are going to change this political reality by political means," the Sandzak SDA secretary general said.

In his words, the Sandzak SDA is ready to start political negotiations with the government in Belgrade without any conditions attached.

Ljajic expressed readiness for political communications with those democratic opposition parties in the country that are committed to peace, adding that there had already been talks with the leaders of some political parties, but he could not say which.

Kosovo

Kosovo Albanians Accused of Maintaining Government

LD0812203494 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1606 GMT 8 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Pristina, 8 December (TANJUG)—According to the latest reports, the district prosecutors in Pristina, Prizren, Pec, and Gnjilane have so far raised charges against 159 individuals of Albanian nationality from Kosovo-Metohija, who are suspected of setting up and being members of a parallel ministry for internal affairs of the so-called republic of Kosovo.

Most of them are former members of the Provincial Secretariat for Internal Affairs of Kosovo who quit their jobs four years ago, in a boycott of Serbia's constitution and laws. [passage omitted]

Most detained persons are from Pristina, where 74 people are under investigation, 46 in Prizren, 22 in Gnjilane and 17 in Pec. [passage omitted]

At the moment 15 people are in hiding. One of them, Jonuz Trstena, was the ringleader and coordinator in the "ministry". They are on the run and a search has been launched after them.

Officials in the prosecutor's office say that the list is not final and that more charges are expected.

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